

Hegel's Dialectic

The Explanation of Possibility



TERRY PINKARD

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Terry Pinkard



TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PRESS
PHILADELPHIA

Temple University Press, Philadelphia 19122
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Published 1988
Printed in the United States of America

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum
requirements of American National Standard for Information
Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials,
ANSI Z39.48-1984

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Pinkard, Terry P.
Hegel's dialectic the explanation of possibility / Terry
Pinkard.
p. cm.
Bibliography p.
Includes index.
ISBN 0-87722-570-2 (alk. paper)
1. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 1770-1831--Contributions in
dialectic. 2. Dialectic--History--19th century. I. Title.
B2949.D5P56 1988
193--dc19

88-22677
CIP

To Vicki

Acknowledgments

Klaus Hartmann read over the first draft of this manuscript and made a number of suggestions that resulted in my rewriting whole sections. Although there are only a few references to his works in the text, his influence runs throughout it. It was through his lectures on Hegel that I first became seriously interested in Hegel's thought. I am greatly indebted for all the help and encouragement that he gave to this project. Others have read all or parts of the text and made helpful suggestions. Norbert Hornstein and Wayne Davis helped me to clear up some Hegelian ideas for those whose philosophical bent does not naturally lead them to Hegel's works. Henry Richardson, H. T. Engelhardt, George Farre, and Steven Kuhn each made a variety of helpful suggestions. Jane Cullen and Doris Braendel of Temple University Press were extremely helpful; their good humor and patience are appreciated. The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation provided me with a grant to spend a year at Tübingen University in the Federal Republic of Germany, where a very rough draft of this manuscript was produced. The School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University provided me with summer research grants to finish the manuscript; my thanks to Charles Pirtle and Peter Krogh for their assistance and encouragement in the project. Vicki Boyle's good humor about Hegel helped me keep it all in perspective.

Portions of the material in Chapter Two appeared earlier in "The Logic of Hegel's Logic" in *The Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26,

no. 4 (October 1979) and in "Hegel's Philosophy of Mathematics" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 41, (September 1980–June 1981). Portions of Chapter Seven appeared earlier in "Freedom and Social Categories in Hegel's Ethics" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 47, no. 2 (December 1986). I am grateful to the editors of those journals for permission to reprint that material.

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INTRODUCTION

Hegelianism and Philosophy

Hegel is certainly an ambiguous figure in the history of philosophy. Depending on which philosophical camp is viewing him, he alternately appears as the embodiment of all that is good in philosophy or as the finest example of just how many things can go wrong in a system of thought. He is at the same time one of the most often cited and least read philosophers in the whole tradition. He is often credited for what are taken to be his great insights: the role of historical understanding in philosophy and social theory, or certain theses about truth as coherence. However, even many of those who credit him with such insights do not actually read him. They simply assimilate some of the lore that has grown up around Hegel and his system of thought.

Interpreting Hegel, moreover, is a pluralistic industry in itself. He is alternately seen as basically a theologian, a historian, a historicist, a social critic, a mystic, even as an overly zealous rationalist. The old saw that there are as many readings of Hegel as there are readers of Hegel may indeed seem to be true.

What often comes as a surprise to many who finally make the effort to read Hegel's texts is, first, that Hegel did not subscribe to almost any of the outrageous beliefs typically ascribed to him, and, second, that his prose, despite its initial opacity for many of his readers in English, turns out to have a startling precision of its own. Hegel develops his system quite rigorously from his basic principles. On a closer and sympathetic reading, Hegel turns out to be a thinker of

of a larger set of categories. Hegel's philosophy has the misleading appearance of always occurring in "triplets" since he always begins with some basic category, shows how it conflicts with an equally basic category, and then offers a speculative explanation using some new category or set of categories to show how the conflict is *only* apparent. Hegelian dialectic is no mysterious form of logic that transcends or is an alternative to ordinary logic. It is a strategy of explanation for a philosophical program that attempts to reconcile most of the major dualisms of the history of philosophy.

I shall also argue that Hegel himself did not completely understand the full implications of the style of philosophy that he was advocating. This can be understood in terms of the Kantian roots of Hegel's theory. Of particular importance is the Kantian idea of a "science of reason." I will argue that it was because Hegel took himself to be engaged in something like the Kantian "science of reason" that he was mistakenly led to see his dialectic as providing not only explanations of the *possibility* of categories but also derivations of the *necessity* of that set of categories.

There are also positive reasons for stressing Hegel's Kantian lineage. Although Hegel is perhaps best known for his theses about the historical nature of ideas and about the importance of cultural factors in the development of theories, those interpretations that make these ideas the central feature of his theory fail to take seriously just how important the Kantian "science of reason" was for Hegel's understanding of his own project. Likewise, failure to take seriously the Kantian basis for Hegel's thought most likely underlies those interpretations of Hegel that make too much of the distinction in his work between reason and understanding (those interpretations usually take "the understanding" to be the faculty that holds opposites apart, "reason" to be the faculty that brings them together). However, seen in terms of its Kantian basis, that distinction would amount to seeing "the understanding" as the faculty that strives to justify independent propositions, whereas reason (as the faculty of drawing inferences—the syllogistic faculty—in Kant) is that which attempts to justify propositions in terms of their belonging to a network, a "whole" of other propositions. Hegel certainly holds to the superiority of "reason" over "the understanding." However, in his view, that superiority consists in the superiority of holistic justification over that of atomistic justification of one proposition at a time. (This way of seeing the distinction of "reason" and "the understanding" also does not lead to attributing

to Hegel the endorsement of the idea that it is rational to utter contradictions.)

Although I stress the Kantian elements of Hegelian dialectic, I shall argue in the end that Hegelian speculative dialectic and Kantian transcendental theory display sharp differences. Hegelian theory does not *prove*, as Kant thought he had done, that *only* with certain categories is, for instance, experience possible. Rather, it is best understood as showing that the introduction of certain types of categories and orderings of them resolves certain dilemmas. (In Hegel's case, these dilemmas are taken to be apparent contradictions between competing categories or categorial schemes. However, many transitions in Hegel's theory cannot be justified by the avoiding of a contradiction. Often the justification for a particular transition seems to be simply a belief that a given category displays a lack of fit with the rest of the categories; often it is just because Hegel thinks that since a better explanation is possible, the better explanation is to be preferred.) Whereas Kantian transcendental arguments attempt to establish a necessary and unique solution to questions of possibility, Hegelian speculative arguments (as understood here) *cannot* establish uniqueness. They can merely offer up one alternative that is justified, if at all, by its superior explanatory power. Kantian arguments claim to establish the only possible explanation; Hegelian arguments, as I will reconstruct them, can claim to establish only the best explanations.

This is not how Hegel describes his system, but it is, I shall argue, where it takes him. This kind of interpretation is therefore by no means a straightforward and noncontroversial understanding of Hegel's project and his results. It is fair to say that Hegel saw his own arguments as establishing unique and necessary solutions to philosophical problems. I shall try to show, however, that Hegelian dialectic need not be interpreted in that way and that, furthermore, this does no special violence to Hegel's text. In doing so, I will also distinguish Hegelian speculative argument from what I shall call metaphysical argument. Hegelian dialectical argument takes its lineage from Kantian transcendental argumentation; metaphysical argument takes its lineage more from Leibnizian styles of argument. Hegel's dialectic is not concerned with positing entities to explain the possibility of things (that I shall call metaphysical argument) but with positing categories to resolve certain dilemmas found in other categories.

In reconstructing Hegel's arguments, I have chosen to focus on three selections from Hegel's work: the *Science of Logic*, sections on

the philosophy of mind from his *Encyclopedia*, and his *Philosophy of Right*. This is not to give any special prominence to these three selections; I am not suggesting, for example, that his aesthetics or his philosophy of religion are of lesser importance or are only derivative from these three sections. However, since these selections have been the focus of much of the debate and the lore surrounding the Hegelian philosophy, they are crucial for showing how the Hegelian dialectic may be interpreted as an explanation of the possibility of certain categories.

There are special reasons, moreover, for going into detail about the *Science of Logic*. It is one of his more notoriously difficult works to interpret, and it is quite frequently passed over in favor of Hegel's more colorful *Phenomenology of Spirit*. It is nonetheless central to Hegel's mature thought. The terms of the *Science of Logic* are the terms of the rest of Hegel's system. It is also the place where Hegel tries to provide the strongest justifications for his system as a whole. I shall thus spend more time on it and its details than I do on the other two sections from Hegel's overall theory.

The *Science of Logic* went through several editions and can be said to appear in two forms. In its shortened form, it appears as a section in Hegel's *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. The *Encyclopedia*, however, was intended as a general, albeit systematic overview of his system and was for use in his lectures; it lacks the more detailed argumentation of the larger *Science of Logic*, which fills in many of the lacunae that one finds in the shorter work.

It seems to be the case that Hegel developed an early form of the *Logic* in Jena, used it as a basis for his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, then substantially revised it and published it pretty much in the form in which we have it.⁴ Even though it was published after the *Phenomenology* (which was originally given the subtitle "First Part of a System of Science"), the *Science of Logic* was to have been the underpinning and mainspring of the entire Hegelian system. It is both Hegel's general ontology and his justification of his method. In a sense, the rest of his system—the philosophy of nature, the ethical and political philosophy and the philosophy of absolute spirit—is to be no more than an application both of the program and the general categories of the *Science of Logic*. The other parts of the system display in concrete form the more abstract categorial structures elaborated and defended in the *Science of Logic*. Moreover, where there sometimes appear to be inferential leaps in the more concrete parts of the system, a perusal of the relevant parts of the *Science of Logic* will often show that Hegel

is only taking over something he thinks that he has already demonstrated elsewhere in the *Science of Logic*.

As such, the *Science of Logic* is crucial for Hegel in two senses. First, it is the basis upon which Hegel builds the rest of his work. Second, it is intended to be a self-sufficient work, to stand on its own (something Hegel would not say of any of the rest of his system). An attempt to understand Hegel's thought in the spirit of Hegel himself must therefore take the *Science of Logic* into account. Only after the nature of that work has been established can one evaluate the cohesiveness of Hegel's thought as a whole. Of course, it may indeed turn out that it does not function as an adequate underpinning for the more intuitive and better known parts of his corpus, such as the *Philosophy of Right*, but that assessment cannot be made without an adequate evaluation of the *Science of Logic* itself.

Perhaps it would be helpful here to distinguish *Hegelian* theory from *Hegel's* theory. Hegel inspired several schools of philosophy, each of which has been characterized by its practitioners and by outsiders as Hegelian. They are understood to be carrying on the Hegelian *program* in philosophy. Each of the schools relies on the texts of the Hegelian philosophy in order to do this, but the crucial differences between the schools lies in their differing understandings of what the program involves.

Any interpreter of Hegel's texts faces a similar problem to that faced by a member of one of the Hegelian schools. In interpreting a philosophical text, we must make certain choices about what is philosophically important and what is only peripheral to the argument. Although it is not a noncontroversial idea, there is one principle of interpretation that holds that when interpreting philosophical texts, one must interpret them so as to make them the best texts they can be, taking into account both fit with the actual words used and fit with an overall plausible and defensible philosophical program. To read a text in a philosophical way is to make certain choices about what is central to the program and its arguments and what is not. Of course, the texts put some very definite constraints on the possible interpretations open to us. Any interpretation that made Hegel into a kind of logical positivist manqué would be out of contention immediately as a reading of *Hegel*. At some point, however, closer attention to the texts will not solve the problems between competing interpretations, since they will be about the proper understanding of the program and not merely about the texts themselves. We may even choose to disregard some aspect of the text because it does not fit

well with the best interpretation of the program that the philosopher defends.

Even if we were able to summon up Hegel himself and ask him how he understood certain texts of his, we would not be significantly better off. Hegel's own interpretation of his texts would be just one among many (having no doubt a special pride of place but having no absolute priority over the others). It would even be possible to interpret the basics of the Hegelian program differently than Hegel himself would. When faced with two competing interpretations of philosophical texts, one of which makes them into interesting and defensible philosophical positions and the other of which makes them into obviously selfcontradictory nonsense, one ought to take the philosophically superior interpretation as the preferred one.⁵

This principle of interpretation is, admittedly, not without its pitfalls. In trying to interpret a philosopher so as to make the text the best text it can be, one runs the danger of simply imposing one's own philosophical prejudices on alien matter and of losing the insights that a much different viewpoint can bring. One can become so wrapped up in making the program plausible or defensible that one's interpretation fails to be an interpretation of *that* text or body of texts. These are real dangers, and there is no magical way out of them. The best one can do is leave the reader forewarned and to try to keep one's own eyes open.⁶

CHAPTER ONE

Dialectical Explanation

I

DIALECTICAL PHILOSOPHY AND DIALECTICAL EXPLANATION

Philosophy according to Hegel is the “thinking study of things,” the “translation” of various items into the “form of thought.”¹ It can presuppose neither its objects nor its method, and it has *Nachdenken*, a kind of reflection, for its principle.² It is also inherently systematic. What is implied by this? To answer this question, we need to look preliminarily at three things: (1) the Hegelian idea of explanation; (2) the idea of a category itself; and (3) the idea of the movement of concepts in his system. I shall try to state how I will understand these items as a basis for what follows.

I shall take Hegelian philosophy to be an attempt to provide a particular kind of *explanation* of things that he often identifies as “dialectical.” This involves a specific type of reading of Hegel’s texts, since he did not explicitly characterize his philosophy as explanatory in the sense that I impute to him. However, I think that this best captures what Hegel was about in his work, even though it involves describing his thought in terms that he himself did not use. Whether this way of reading Hegel is justified depends ultimately on whether this best allows us to make sense of his thought as a whole without at the same time doing violence to his texts or to the spirit of his work.

The object of such explanation is "not things" (*Dinge*) but "matters,"³ "the conception of things" (*die Sache, der Begriff der Dinge*).⁴ The *Science of Logic* is the science of the determinations of thought, but thought in its "immanent determinations" has "the same content" as "the true natures of things" (*Dinge*).⁵ The "matter in itself" (*Sache an sich selbst*) is, moreover, a pure thought (*reine Gedanke*).⁶ If the method is the "course of the matter itself" (*der Gang der Sache selbst*),⁷ then it follows logically from Hegel's own words that the *Science of Logic* is a reconstruction not of the movement of things in the cosmos but is instead one of conceptions.

This does not necessarily make the Hegelian theory into a purely semantic theory. To say of something that it is a category is to classify it as a conceptual item, but it is also, in Hegel's view, to say that it is a *Sache*, a "matter" or "object." To see this point, we should distinguish (as Hegel does not) a *Sache* from an "object." Let us take a "matter" or *Sache* to be a description of an object, represented by adding "that" to a proposition (or to a Fregean thought, *Gedanke*).

If we make this distinction and understand it in this way, then we can take Hegel's idea of the movement of the matters themselves (*Gang der Sache*) as a metaphorical movement of those conceptual unities produced by describing entities in a certain way. To make a Hegelian play on a Wittgensteinian principle: the world is the totality of *Sachen*, "matters", not of *Dinge*, "things."⁸ In our experience, whether it be in the laboratory or of what Husserl called the life-world, we encounter conceptual unities, configurations of the world produced by our adopting certain descriptive schemes. Behind or beyond this world is nothing (even the idea of a thing-in-itself functions as a limiting concept in our conceptual apparatus). To paraphrase Hegel himself, one can no more jump out of one's system of description than one can jump out of one's skin.

This has to do with Hegel's somewhat peculiar usage of the term, "*Begriff*." The most natural translation of the term would be "concept." Kant, for example, uses "*Begriff*," and it is always translated as "concept" in his works (such as in his famous dictum about intuitions without concepts being blind and concepts without intuitions being empty). However, Hegel seems to be using "*Begriff*" in a very special sense. He attributes various things to "the" concept. He castigates other philosophers for not reaching the level of "the concept." He claims that only "the concept" is true and concrete. Indeed, because it seems to be so obviously a special sense of "*Begriff*," many if not most commentators have assumed that something *very* special must

be Hegel's sense. The more usual translation of the term as "Notion" (always with a capital) is an attempt to capture this.

We need not, however, posit some esoteric meaning to Hegel's usage to make sense of it. Hegel's use of "*Begriff*" could be understood through the distinction between *concepts* and *conceptions*. A concept is nonexplanatory and is expressed by a term.⁹ A conception is explanatory and is expressed by a proposition; conceptions, however, express beliefs within a system of beliefs. Hegel uses the term "*Begriff*" to express the idea of a conception, not a concept. It is part of Hegel's thesis that concepts make sense only within some more determinate system of conceptions. At the level of concepts, we simply share meanings; we can use the words correctly and understand each other. We can all understand our respective usages of "space," "nature," "justice," "person," and so on. We find, though, that despite this type of agreement in meanings, we still have disagreements with each other on a variety of issues (such as whether space is absolute or relative, whether reasons can be causes, and so on). This is because we have different conceptions of these matters, even though we share the same concepts. In this sense, people can share concepts, in that they can use the same words and understand each other, but still differ about which conception is adequate or best. For example, I might share a concept of fairness with another person in the sense that we can both agree on its abstract meaning. However, we might have very different conceptions of it. I might hold that fairness requires a more egalitarian distribution of goods in society, while my friend might deny that it has this implication at all. We would have different conceptions of fairness when (1) we hold different theories of, for example, justice; and/or (2) we have different sets of beliefs about what are the facts in our society. Einstein and Newton might have shared the same concept of, for example, space but have had radically different conceptions of it.¹⁰ When Hegel thus speaks of the *Sachen* as forming the proper object of philosophy and identifies with *Begriff*, we can take him to be marking this concept/conception distinction. We think of the world in terms of various conceptions, various systems of belief captured in propositions. Categories on this view express basic conceptions in terms of which we describe and evaluate the world.¹¹

Using the concept/conception distinction, we could put one of Hegel's theses like this: there is no view of the world that does not embody specific conceptions of the way the world is; these conceptions are related to each other; they mutually support and reinforce one

The object of such explanation is "not things" (*Dinge*) but "matters,"³ "the conception of things" (*die Sache, der Begriff der Dinge*).⁴ The *Science of Logic* is the science of the determinations of thought, but thought in its "immanent determinations" has "the same content" as "the true natures of things" (*Dinge*).⁵ The "matter in itself" (*Sache an sich selbst*) is, moreover, a pure thought (*reine Gedanke*).⁶ If the method is the "course of the matter itself" (*der Gang der Sache selbst*),⁷ then it follows logically from Hegel's own words that the *Science of Logic* is a reconstruction not of the movement of things in the cosmos but is instead one of conceptions.

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Using the concept/conception distinction, we could put one of Hegel's theses like this: there is no view of the world that does not embody specific conceptions of the way the world is; these conceptions are related to each other; they mutually support and reinforce one

another. Any philosophical *theory* will be an explanation of how these conceptions relate to each other and what principles underlie them. A theory will also be a justification of one set of conceptions over another.

Translating "*Begriff*" as "conception" in this sense also throws light on Hegel's usage of the term "moment," to characterize the relation of conceptions to each other. The general idea seems to have been drawn from mechanics, but Hegel uses it in a special sense.¹² Conceptions that are moments of another conception cannot be considered outside of the conception in which they are integrated (*aufgehoben*). The metaphorical term "moment," expresses Hegel's thesis that the determinateness of categorial conceptions arises only from the kinds of logical and explanatory moves that are made from them and to them. The moments of a particular conception are constituted by the set of other propositions that are logically and explanatorily linked to it. The explication of the moments is an explication of the conceptions in question. For example, if we wish to explicate the conception that we have of a political concept like "legitimacy," we will have to bring in conceptions about the justification of power, about the proper role of the state, about what motivates humans, and so on. All these other conceptions in terms of which we elucidate and defend our conception of legitimacy would be said to be its *moments*.

For many readers of Hegel this will seem perhaps hopelessly anachronistic. Does not Hegel in speaking of the *movement* of concepts commit himself to at least some form of metaphysical hypostatization of concepts? It depends on how literally one takes the idea of movement in the Hegelian system to be and how one understands Hegel's usage of "*Begriff*." The movement of concepts in the *Science of Logic* may be taken as a metaphor for their logical relations. What moves in the *Science of Logic* are not the conceptions but thought itself. Each category is a *position* to which thought moves. The various positions are constituted by the conceptions to which thought moves. The sense of "movement" here is thus modeled on the same idea as is expressed in our talk about moving from the premise to the conclusion in an argument. This way of construing Hegel's talk of the movement of conceptions and *Sache* certainly does not automatically commit Hegel to any form of metaphysical idealism (taken as a doctrine that all that exists is in some sense mental). Perhaps there are other parts of Hegel's theory that can only be interpreted as expressions of metaphysical idealism, but they need not be taken to be so by virtue of his idea of "movement."

On the Hegelian view, philosophy also does not typically involve proving or postulating that entities exist. But surely, one might object, this is a false view of at least some philosophy. The ontological argument tries to prove the existence of God. Surely Plato thought that he had given very good reasons for thinking that the forms existed. Quine thinks that he has wonderful grounds for thinking that meanings do not exist but that classes do. And so on. Does this mean that these people are not philosophers? The answer to this question is important for understanding just what Hegel's dialectic involves. We can distinguish several ways in which such philosophical explanations proceed. Let us distinguish between metaphysical explanations and transcendental explanations. A metaphysical explanation is one that answers the question "How is it possible that . . . ?" by postulating the existence of some entity; metaphysical explanations take the form "X is possible only if Φ exists." Examples of metaphysical explanations in the history of philosophy are, for example, that order in the universe is possible only if God exists, that it is possible to say truly that an act is just only if an eternal unchanging Form of justice exists, that mathematical proofs are possible only if abstract entities exist, and so forth. A transcendental explanation is one that says that some domain of thought or experience is possible only if we conceive of it in terms of certain categories; it says nothing about things existing but only of how we must think of them if it is possible to think of them at all.¹³

Hegel described his own philosophy as a third alternative: not as transcendental (he would have vehemently rejected such a Kantian label as applied to this thought), but as speculative. I shall nonetheless take Hegelian speculative arguments as descendants of the Kantian transcendental arguments. A speculative argument is similar to a transcendental argument, except that it cannot claim its solutions are unique or necessary. Hegel's main question in his *Science of Logic* is "How would it be possible to think truly of what is, of being?" and the question permits two types of answers, both of which are given by Hegel at various points in the development of his philosophy. There is the categorial answer (it is possible only if we construe the categorial structure of being in such and such a way), and there is the metaphysical answer (it is possible only if Spirit exists and progressively discloses itself to us in such and such developmental forms). I shall argue that Hegel *need* take only the first type of explanation, and that he *may* take the second but *need not* do so. One of the underlying premises of the interpretation being pursued here will be

the necessity of keeping a wedge between these two types of explanation.

Hegel also ranks his explanations in a kind of teleological ordering. In a well-known sentence Hegel claims that "what is rational is actual, and what is actual is rational."¹⁴ This sentence has been variously interpreted as a statement of political conservatism or religious piety, but it may also be given another interpretation. First, it can be taken to mean that a more rational, more defensible theory is a better representation of the way the world is than a less rational, less defensible theory. However, as we shall see, it also functions in two other ways in the Hegelian theory. First, if two explanations are possible, and the former gives a richer view of the world than the latter, then the former is the preferred one. Thus, explanations are ranked according to how well they embody this unstated Hegelian principle. Second, they are also ranked according to how well they embody other systemic principles (I will postpone the elaboration of these principles until their individual appearances in the exposition of Hegel's theory). I will call these latter two functions of the principle Hegel's "teleology of explanation" and shall consider this teleology as it appears in the exposition of the theory.

II

DIALECTICAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Hegel does break decisively with Kant in his understanding of the role of the history of philosophy, and this difference is important for how we are to understand the idea of Hegelian dialectical explanation. In order to get a handle on this difference, let us contrast what can broadly be called the Aristotelian-Hegelian view of the history of philosophy with what can be called the Kantian-critical view. On the latter view, the history of philosophy is seen to rest on some kind of deep and fundamental *mistake*. For Kant, this was the failure of all past philosophy to understand the function and the limits of pure reason. Kant cleverly set up the past history of philosophy as attempts at either extending pure reason beyond the realm of its sensible employment (a typical rationalist mistake) or of not understanding the constitutive role of reason in experience (the empiricist mistake). In

any event, the past for Kant was the repeated application of one of these fundamental errors. Kant's understanding of the relation of philosophy to its history became a paradigm for many later philosophers who would have hardly called themselves Kantians. For example, for the early logical positivists of the twentieth century, the fundamental error was one of not understanding the conditions for the meaningfulness of sentences (the verification principle). For some of the followers of the later Wittgenstein, past philosophy committed the error of not understanding how ordinary language functioned. In the same spirit, Richard Rorty has recently attempted to show how most of the modern tradition proceeds from the deeply mistaken belief that there exist mental entities or "representations" that must be matched up with the world.¹⁵

In contrast, the Aristotelian-Hegelian view of the history of philosophy sees past philosophies not as resting on fundamental, deep (and hidden) mistakes but as alternative explanations. In the beginning of the *Metaphysics* Aristotle characterizes the philosophies of his predecessors and attempts to show how each fails to explain things in some fashion or another. He does not show that there is some common, fatal mistake in all his predecessors, only that they are lacking in explanatory power. Hegel takes much the same view and begins, for example, his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* with a stylized presentation of the types of explanations suggested by his predecessors. Each philosophical system is taken as a possible alternative, which can only be shown to be inadequate as an explanation, not simply as a theory resting on some deep mistake that puts it beyond repair. In the *Science of Logic*, for example, Hegel speaks quite disparagingly of the idea that one can ever refute another philosophy. In speaking of the Spinozistic system, Hegel notes, "With respect to the refutation of a philosophical system . . . one must get rid of the erroneous idea of regarding the system as out and out *false*, as if the *true* system by contrast were only *opposed* to the false."¹⁶ He goes on in the section cited to speak of how the refutation of a theory cannot be a matter of showing it to have left something out, as if the philosopher simply failed to explain certain facts; it must show that the theory itself somehow exhibits some internal inconsistency or incoherence. It must fail internally as an alternative explanation.

Hegel notes: "the history of philosophy exhibits in the various philosophies which come on the scene in part only One philosophy."¹⁷ On the one hand, Hegel holds an ahistorical view of philosophy. Philosophy (like the other forms of what he calls Absolute Spirit, viz.,

art and religion) has no real history. Unlike the texts of past scientists, the texts of Plato and Descartes are contemporary to us today; we read them as alternative explanations, not as stages on the way to the true view of things—not as, for example, we might read the works of Ptolemy as important historical antecedents to the better view. There would be nothing strikingly odd, for example, in a person's saying that she was an expert in relativity theory but admitting that she had never read a word actually written by Einstein himself, having read instead other works on Einsteinian physics. Presumably, it is not unthinkable that a person could be an excellent physicist without having once opened Newton's *Principia*. It would, however, be extremely odd for someone to claim expertise in, say, Plato but to admit only to having read books about him and never to actually having read Plato himself. The texts of philosophy retain an immediacy that the works of science do not (the same is true of art and religion: the paintings of Vermeer retain as powerful an aesthetic quality today as the most modern of paintings; religion, if it is true, remains as true for moderns as it did for the ancients).

On the other hand, it is clear that philosophy (just like religion and art) actually does have a history, and that later developments are to be explained as developments from earlier stages. One can understand Descartes as if he were a contemporary thinker, but one also cannot fully understand him except against the background of the medieval philosophies against which he thought he was reacting (just as one cannot understand the medievals except against the background of the confrontation of Christianity and classical Greek philosophy mediated by the Arabs).

The way in which these two things hang together for Hegel has to do with his understanding of dialectical explanation. Hegel speaks of dialectic in many places throughout his work: roughly, his comments on it fall into three categories: (1) dialectic is not something new but is already there in Plato, indeed, implicitly there in all philosophies; (2) it is the very nature of conceptual determination, the soul of the so-called movement of concepts; (3) it is brought back into modern philosophy not by Hegel himself but by Kant. For example, in speaking of how Kant reintroduced dialectic into philosophy, Hegel says that Kant showed that "the general idea on which he based his expositions and which he vindicated is the *objectivity of mere appearance* [*Schein*] and the *necessity of the contradiction* which belongs to the nature of the determinations of thought."¹⁸ (Hegel also says that it is "an infinite merit of the Kantian philosophy. . . to have given the impetus

to the restoration of logic and dialectic in the sense of the examination of the *determinations of thought in and for themselves*.”¹⁹) Dialectic in the sense that Hegel takes it is defined by him as “the grasping of opposites in their unity or the positive in the negative” in which “speculative thought consists.”²⁰

Hegel’s understanding of dialectic can be reconstructed in something like the following way. Philosophy is the explanation of how things are possible. A philosophical explanation is called for when there is an apparent (*Schein*) incompatibility between two fundamental beliefs, each of which seems on its own to be true.²¹ The thesis of dialectical philosophy is that the basic incompatibilities of classical philosophy—and especially the ones presented by Kant in his “Transcendental Dialectic”—are only apparent ones (*Schein*) and can be reconciled by enlarging the categorial context in terms of which the original opposition was framed. Dialectical philosophy, that is, explains the possibility of apparently incompatible categorial beliefs by trying to show that the apparent incompatibility is *only* apparent, that the contradiction is avoided once one expands one’s framework of discourse in the appropriate way.

This understanding of dialectical philosophy is related to Hegel’s celebrated distinction of reason and the understanding. Reason, as the faculty that looks at ideas in terms of their inferential links to other ideas, is the faculty of establishing the compatibility of such ideas. By looking only at individual propositions, the understanding cannot do this; it ends up affirming contradictory concepts.²² Hegel does not believe, so it seems, that closer analysis of the concepts in question will resolve the incompatibility in question (that is what is wrong with “the understanding”). What propels the dialectic is the emergence of new contradictions in the explanation that avoided the old ones, and the dialectic continues until no more contradictions emerge. (I hope to show that although Hegel takes each dialectical movement to be the result of a contradiction, in fact many such transitions in his *Science of Logic* and *Philosophy of Right* are not motivated by any contradiction at all but by other considerations. Sometimes the transition may only be seen as justified in terms of its resolving not a contradiction but an alleged incoherence with other aspects of the system; sometimes simply the idea that a better, more inclusive explanation is possible seems to motivate the move to a new category or set of categories.)

Hegel links his method with a particular thesis about the history of philosophy. It too moves, as it were, dialectically. Philosophers

discover new contradictions in the older theories, and in turn new contradictions are found in the newer theories. Hegel's thesis is that if one were to begin at the origin of the history of philosophy (for him that would be, in effect, to begin with Parmenides) and trace out the development of philosophical theories, with the idea that each new theory is the attempt to explain better the apparent incompatibilities of its predecessors, one would end up with much the same progression as if one were to begin simply with the basic concepts themselves and think through the kinds of explanations that would best account for the apparent incompatibilities that one would naturally find. A consistently thought-out piece of dialectical philosophy would thus more or less mimic the history of philosophy. The justification for each succeeding move would be that it is the best explanation for the incompatibilities of the previous stage; it would mimic, then, the kind of justification that the great philosophers invoked to justify the introduction of their theories. Thus Hegel claims, "the same development of thought which is presented in the history of philosophy is presented in philosophy itself, *purely in the element of thought*, but liberated from that historical externality."²³ (This is also one sense of Hegel's idea of how *Aufhebung*, "integration," works in his dialectic; each succeeding theory preserves the explanations of its predecessors while integrating them into a greater unity, a more comprehensive theory.)

If this thesis is true, then one would want Hegel to do two things. First, we would want some kind of argument on his part that authentic philosophy actually begins with Parmenides. He tries to do this both in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, which we shall not go into here, and in his *Science of Logic*.²⁴ Second, we would expect some kind of systematic argument to the effect that an adequately constructed philosophical theory must begin with some Parmenidean concept of Being. He tries to do this in a short section of the *Science of Logic* called "With What Must the Science Begin?" It is to that and to Hegel's more specific arguments that we now must turn.

CHAPTER TWO

The Being of Individuals

I

THE OPENING MOVES OF THE DIALECTICAL RECONSTRUCTION

We make, so we think, many true statements about the way the world is. Hegel wants to explain how it is possible that we can think truly about being, about what is the case. When we make true statements, what types of categories must we be using in order to make true statements? When we say that roses are red or that gravitation is a fundamental force, how is it possible that we are speaking of the way the world is? He frames this question in light of the Kantian doubts that it is possible at all to say that this is the way the *world* is, as opposed to the way we must experience and think about that world. Any philosophical explanation must begin, so Hegel thinks, with an answer to that Kantian doubt.

He does not think that the postulation of any metaphysical thesis will adequately perform this kind of explanatory role. Thus, he rejects at the outset claims such as “the real is mental, so we can think truly about it because it involves only reflecting on our own minds.” This cannot work because it does not answer the Kantian doubt that such a metaphysical postulation reflects only the structure of our own minds and not the structure of the world as it really is in itself. In fact, such a philosophical explanation cannot be achieved by *postulating* anything at all, whether it be a God who would not deceive us,

a world of preestablished harmony, or any of a number of traditional answers. In fact, his chapter heading in the *Science of Logic* expresses succinctly his problem: with what must the science, the theory begin? And the answer seems perhaps obvious: one must begin with a conception of being itself, since the problem is one of explaining how it is possible to think truly of being. We must explain why being has such and such characteristics or, in Hegel's words, *determinations*.

Hegel has a well-known answer to this problem. His answer has often been taken to be the metaphysical thesis that being and nothing are the same, or that the contradiction between being and nothing is a feature of the world. In fact, Hegel holds nothing like that. To see what Hegel is up to, we have to look at his reasons for starting with the category of pure being and then to interpret and evaluate his claim about the identity of being and nothing.

In order to provide an answer to the question "With what must the science begin?" Hegel elaborates a series of conditions that seem impossible to satisfy. He notes at least three initial conditions that must be satisfied for this beginning and this theory: (1) If the theory is to explain determinateness, then the beginning must somehow undercut determinateness, that is, be the seemingly impossible: an indeterminate conception.¹ If the beginning is itself determinate, then it leaves open the Kantian doubt that this initial determinateness is only something we impose on the world, not a feature of the world itself. (2) It must be logically immediate; it must not be the inferential result of something else, if it is to be the first move in a theory that cannot state its rules (the method) beforehand. It cannot state the method beforehand, because that would be to presume what kind of relations are to be constitutive of the conceptions that make up the theory. (3) The beginning must be a conception relating to the object of knowledge. If it does not, then it cannot serve as the beginning of a theory of being, since that (ultimately) is the object of all our claims to know something.²

Moreover, the statement of the method, of the logic that connects the categories must come at the end. Since the logic of the categories is constitutive of their determinateness, the statement of the logic is tantamount to a statement of what Hegel calls the "ground" of the categories in question. The emergence of the logic itself as thematic within the theory is the emergence of the "true" ground of what has come before; in Hegel's words, "that the forward movement is a return to the ground, to the primordial [*Ursprünglichen*] and true, on which depends and, in fact, from which originates, that with which the

beginning is made."³ The initial conception is to be, like all the more determinate conceptions within the theory, implicitly defined by the logic that emerges fully only at the end: "this last, the ground, is then that out of which the first emerges, which first appears as an immediacy."⁴ What at the beginning of the theory can only appear as something merely immediate or stipulated is in fact constituted by the final section of the theory. But likewise the basic categories that form the end of the theory are things that emerge from the natural development of these conceptions and are from that point of view also things derived from these initial conceptions.

There is another, not clearly articulated assumption underlying Hegel's reflections on the beginning of his theory. That assumption seems to be something like the following. If the "science" is to begin without any presuppositions, then no particular object can take explanatory pride of place. This means that we should treat everything as a *posit*. All categories, even that of mind itself, are to be counted as explanatory posits that are justified only by their explanatory value. Since everything is to be regarded as an explanatory posit, no particular object has any explanatory priority over the other at the outset. Ultimately, so we shall see, Hegel will argue that mind is self-positing and thus takes on a kind of explanatory although not metaphysical priority. The category of being itself turns out to be a posit of mind (it is the best explanation of how thought can think of itself—being is posited by thought to explain how it is that thought can think about the things it does). Indeed, all the categories will be seen as explanatory posits, and thought will posit itself as that which does the positing. The assumption can perhaps be crystallized into the following: we begin with only the goal of explaining how it is that we can truly think about "things" (including thought itself), and we ask ourselves what categories we need to posit to explain this capacity for true thought.

Hegel argues that only one conception fulfills all these conditions—to be a conception of being (since it is being that we talk about), indeterminate, free of any stated logic, a ground from which the logic can develop, and which fulfills the requirement of treating everything as an explanatory posit. This category is what Hegel calls the conception of pure being. He characterizes this as indeterminate immediacy and equal only to itself ("*unbestimmten Unmittelbarkeit . . . sich selbst gleich*").⁵ This initial conception is something that is primitive, not susceptible to further analysis—a *Nichtanalysierbares*,⁶ something that cannot be shown to have any more primitive pred-

ecessors. As the most primitive conception, it is the presupposition of all other conceptions and is free of any logic that can be stated at the outset.⁷

Such a conception of being, however, makes it logically equivalent to the concept of pure nothing. Only by virtue of some determination could this conception of being be distinguished from anything else. A conception of pure being that sees being as "pure" and "indeterminate" cannot distinguish being from nothing. But this cannot be right. If any two categories are distinct, they are the categories of being and nothing. What is going on?

Taken in this form, the beginning exhibits what Hegel takes to be paradigmatic for all philosophical dilemmas: we do not see how two basic categories are both possible. In this case, two concepts that simply do not mean the same are equated, yet the contrary assumption—if anything is true, then being is different from nothing—also seems to be valid (indeed it is *this* assumption that actually underpins Hegel's theory).⁸ The first dilemma is the contradiction between the *assumption* that being is different from nothing and the *statement* that they are the same.⁹ What sets up the contradiction as necessary is that what is most basically true ("being is different from nothing") is not capable of true assertion at this level of discourse. At this level of discourse it is not *possible* to express the difference of being and nothing. Hegel goes to great pains to express this point, noting that being "does not pass over but *has passed over*" (my emphasis).¹⁰ By this, he intends to call attention to the fact that one cannot even separate the two conceptions in order to see one pass over, as it were, into the other. His point is that however much Parmenideans would like to insist on the distinction, there is no way at this level of discourse to make that distinction.

This immediate passage of one into the other is equivalent to a specific conception of becoming: the passage of being into nothing and nothing into being. "Becoming" does not here refer to the ordinary conception of it that would imply that *something* (a determinate being) passes over into nothing. It denotes rather the "shiftiness," the "unsteadiness" of the previous conceptions of pure being and pure nothing: indeed, "passing over [*Übergehen*]" is the same as becoming, except that in the former one tends to think of the two terms, from one of which passing over is made to the other, as at rest, apart from each other, the passing over taking place *between* them."¹¹ This conception of becoming does not solve the dilemma; it expresses it.

As a solution, Hegel proposes a move to a new conception that is more developed and resolves the kind of protocontradiction that one finds at the level of being and nothing. We begin with the category of being, and we then see what we must posit in order to avoid the contradictions that ensue from that initial posit. It is possible to distinguish being from nothing only if being is existence, determinate being (*Dasein*). ("*Dasein*" should probably be rendered here simply as "existence," but then one would have trouble with rendering the later term in the section on Essence, "*Existenz*." Hegel's translators have by and large rendered "*Dasein*" as "determinate being." As we shall see, this is not an unimportant matter of translation. Consequently, I shall often translate "*Dasein*" as "existence, determinate being." This makes the flow of words a bit awkward, but with Hegelian texts, that is generally the price one has to pay.)

The initial *logic* thus emerges with the initial conceptions: the logic of pure being is to have passed over into pure nothing, this passage leading to a new conception, *Dasein*, determinate being (existence). What has happened and why does Hegel think we should care?

First of all, the beginning of his theory mirrors, so Hegel thinks, the beginning in history of philosophy itself. Indeed, Hegel thinks that there is some necessity in this, although this thesis is not central to his claims in the *Science of Logic*.¹² If Parmenides is taken as the beginning of philosophy—not merely as the beginning of attempts at explanation *per se* but of attempts at explaining the *possibility* of basic categories—then one finds that the move from Parmenides to Heraclitus is immanent within the doctrine of Parmenides himself. Parmenides wonders how it is possible to say anything true at all and arrives at the doctrine that one can say of being only that it is. Hegel's point is that "being" for Parmenides can mean only "nothing," that within Parmenides's theory a fundamental contradiction emerges, viz., between the belief that being is indeed to be distinguished from nothing, and the inability to say anything about being.

Second, the seemingly impossible has been done. From a beginning in the category of indeterminate being, we have reached the category of determinate existence. Third, by beginning in this way, not only do we answer the initial questions of Hegel's own theory, we also give a sense to the idea that philosophical explanation, both conceptually and historically, is the explanation of possibility and the positing of new categories to resolve dilemmas in the earlier ones. The explanatory program is underway.

II

THE RUBRICS OF HEGELIAN DIALECTIC

The rather striking beginning of the *Science of Logic* presents the basic structure of the whole work. Hegel describes this somewhat obliquely: he speaks of it as the "ground of the whole science"¹³ and says that the progression in the theory is only a "further determination"¹⁴ of the beginning. Or, as he also puts it, "Thus the beginning of philosophy is the foundation [*Grundlage*] which is present and preserved throughout the entire subsequent development, remaining completely immanent in its further determinations."¹⁵ What this means is that the moves (or "logic") of the conceptions of being and nothing represent the structure of the work. The logic of other more developed conceptions of being are constructed according to the logic of the conception of pure being: each conception of being takes its determinateness, as it were, from its own "nothing," from what Hegel calls its *negation*. It is the *assumed* necessity to distinguish being from nothing that establishes the pattern for each successive move in the *Science of Logic*. Each new conception is to be introduced as a way to avoid the contradictions of a lower level.

Hegel proposes that we attempt to construct all our categorical conceptions in terms of these kinds of moves that are necessary to avoid contradictions at a certain level of discourse — in more Hegelian terms, between a categorical conception and what he calls its determinate negation. The determinate negation of a category is in Hegelian parlance its "other." Used in this sense, "determinism", for example, is the Hegelian "other" to "freedom." The involvement of a conception with its other leads to a new conception that is thereby justified as a product of and a solution to the dilemmas found at the lower level. The higher level conception is one in which the dilemmas of the lower level conceptions do not appear.

Hegel calls such a movement an *Aufhebung*. Within the Hegelian theory the term means "integration": the higher level conception *integrates* the logic of the lower ones. The determinations that a conception gains by its references to its other, that is, by the move from it to its negation, are integrated within the higher conception.

Hegel holds later categories to be implicit in the earlier ones. In what sense, however, are they implicit? Hegel holds that the later categories follow with necessity from the earlier ones. This belief in necessity cashes out in the following way. Hegel holds that the later categories are not only the explanations of the possibility of the earlier

ones but are also the *only* explanations that are possible. By accepting the validity of the categories at the lower level, one accepts the dilemmas inherent to them, and since the dilemmas are unacceptable, one must therefore also accept the resolutions of the dilemmas. Accepting one set of categories thus necessarily implies accepting the other categories that resolve the logical dilemmas of the earlier ones.

This sense of "implicit," however, rests on accepting Hegel's belief that the later categories are the only possible resolutions to the dilemmas found in the earlier ones. This idea is part of Hegel's Kantian heritage of the "transcendental science of reason." If Hegel's solutions, however, are shown not to be the only ones or if the so called logical dilemmas turn out not to be contradictions but something weaker, then the Kantian, "scientific" element of Hegel's theory would be severely undermined. As we shall see, it is precisely that element of Hegel's thought that proves to be the most difficult to sustain.

There are three basic types of explanatory structures within Hegel's theory: (1) The moves appropriate to the logic of being, where one conception passes over into another conception; this logic is appropriate to describing and differentiating individuals from one another. (2) The moves appropriate to the logic of essence, where each conception has a certain independence of its own but is mirrored in another conception. This is described by Hegel as a reflection of one into the other; this term, "reflection," is perhaps pilfered by Hegel from its use in transformational geometry, where it denotes a kind of rigid motion (movements that do not change the shape or size of the plane figure) in which a figure is transformed into another one by choosing a line on the plane and "reflecting" the points of the plane as if a mirror were placed on the line. This would make sense, since Hegel holds that the cause is reflected in its effect, the form in its content and so on. This is the appropriate logic for descriptions of substructure/superstructure relations.¹⁶ (3) The moves appropriate to the logic of conceptuality itself, where one moves to a new conception in which the first conception has a continuity, for example, the way a syllogistic inference is structured (these will turn out to be conceptions of systems).

Although there are three basic types of logic in the theory, all three logics are nevertheless structured by the opening move.¹⁷ The beginning set of moves, then, have a double role: (1) they form a particular set of principles, that is to say, they are metalogical for the logic of being, which is only a particular logic of the theory; (2) they form a general set of principles, that is, they are metalogical not only

for the logic of being but for the logic of essence and the logic of conceptuality as well. However, if the latter is the case, how can the logic of essence and conceptuality be novel? If the logic of being is metalogical for the other two, then does that not mean that the other two are reducible to the logic of being?

Here one must distinguish the sense in which the beginning of the theory presents the basic moves of the theory and the sense in which later stages of the theory are novel developments of this initial move. The sense in which the opening of the logic presents the characteristic moves of the rest of the theory is to be understood through Hegel's idiosyncratic use of the concept of negation. The logic of the various conceptions in the theory, it is to be remembered, constitute the determinateness of those conceptions. The opening moves present just that logic: determinateness is to be reconstructed through the means of what Hegel calls negation. Only negation is immanent enough in the categories in question to do the job that the Hegelian theory demands. Other proposals are to be rejected as being either external to the matter at hand or as containing presuppositions.

It might seem, though, that Hegel's own objections to these other proposals could be raised against his own. To speak of a conception as a negation of another conception would require, so it seems, that the two conceptions be determinate. That is, it might be argued that negation is no less external than a number of other relations. Indeed, a negation is always a negation of something, hence, negation must assume the prior determinateness of that of which it is the negation. Therefore, Hegel's use of negation would be just as arbitrary as the use of any other means.

"Negation" is used in a special sense in Hegel's *Science of Logic* and is to be preferred, Hegel argues, not only because it is immanent to the content in question but because a preliminary account of it can be given. Negation is preceded by the initial conception of Nothing. The opening conception of nothing is not simply equivalent to negation; it is the negation in abstraction from that of which it is the negation, viz., being. In its initial use, "Nothing" is not even equivalent to nonbeing, "for in non-being the relation to being is contained,"¹⁸ and in the beginning the logical relations are to be developed, not presupposed. Of the relation between being and nothing, Hegel says, "But we are concerned first of all not with the form of opposition (with the form, that is, also of *relation*) but with the abstract, immediate negation: nothing, purely on its own account, denial [*Verneinung*] devoid of any relations—what could also be expressed if one so wished merely by 'not.'"¹⁹ In other places Hegel speaks of "this indetermi-

nateness or abstract negation,"²⁰ noting that "the passing over [*Übergehen*] in question is not yet a relation [*Verhältnis*]."²¹ At the beginning one cannot say of being and nothing that they are alike, unlike, nor even that they "pass over" into one another *as long as* one remains on the level of the two initial conceptions of pure being and pure nothing. Negation, so it turns out, is a posit to explain retrospectively how we could distinguish being from nothing.²² Since it plays such a basic role, Hegel gives it a basic explanatory place within his system.

Just as we can explain how we differentiate being from nothing only by positing new categories, we can give the full explanation of the beginning only within the full system of the theory itself. We can explain how it is possible to think truly of being, that is, only from the standpoint of the whole system of categories found in the *Science of Logic*. New categories are justified to make up for internal deficiencies of what we have called lower levels. They are required to keep the explanation from sinking into self-contradiction or incoherence. The introduction of each new category is justified by its being the best proposal to enlarge the system of categories so that contradiction is avoided. The determinateness of the various categories is constituted by the place that they have within the system; the meaning therefore of the categories of being and nothing is dependent on their place in the whole system of conceptions. Hegel's well-known doctrine that the truth is the whole signifies that the determinateness of categorial conceptions is not to be reconstructed in isolation from each other but in terms of their logical and explanatory relations to one another—particularly in terms of the kinds of relations that they have to their "determinate negations," the categories that form the kind of oppositions that dialectical philosophy tries to reconcile. The "determinate negations" of a conception are those other conceptions that seem to be incompatible with it.

The solution to the protocontradiction found at the level of being and nothing is to introduce a conception of existence (determinate being). Hegel thus firmly rejects the idea that one can sensibly distinguish being from existence (determinate being)—thus rejecting not only Parmenides but also, prospectively seen, Heidegger as well. Both Parmenides's (and Heidegger's) attempt fails for reasons internal to the account itself.²³ To show this, Hegel introduces conceptions of reality and negation as explications of the *moments* of his conception of existence (determinate being).

The use of the term "moment" is important for Hegel. The relation of conceptions like reality and negation to more general conceptions of existence (determinate being) is not an inclusion of species within

their genus. Conceptions that are moments of another conception cannot be considered outside of the conception in which they are integrated [*aufgehoben*]. Being and nothing are thus the *moments* of becoming; they are not the *species* of becoming. It is the movement of being and nothing that constitutes becoming: this conception of becoming "subsists in this movement."²⁴

From becoming, Hegel moves to what he calls a new position of immediacy, that of *Dasein*, determinate being. "Immediacy" and "mediacy" denote types of *positions* in the "game" of the *Logic*. To say that one has moved to a position of immediacy is therefore to describe one's present position in the theory, viz., that one is on a new level of discourse. An immediate position is one that is the solution to an earlier contradiction. This immediate position then engenders new dilemmas at its level, and one is caught in a new position of mediacy.

The motor of the Hegelian theory is the exhibition of contradiction (or at least incoherence) and the avoidance of it by positing new conceptions (the crucial role of positing is considered in Chapter Six). The guiding hypothesis of the theory is that at certain levels of discourse one finds oneself in contradictions that can be avoided only if the framework of categories is expanded correctly. The rigor of the theory is constituted by the principles by which the framework is expanded. When the contradiction at one level becomes apparent, one is in a position of *mediacy*; when one avoids the contradiction by moving to a new level of discourse, one is in a new position of *immediacy*, which in turn becomes a position of mediacy when a contradiction on that level is engendered.²⁵ This is, incidentally, one way of understanding Hegel's idea that the final stage of the theory is immediate; being the final stage, it engenders no more contradictions. Every stage of the theory is thus mediate or immediate, depending on how one is viewing that stage.

The idea of a *level* of discourse here is metaphorical. Nonetheless, "level" is the appropriate metaphor since it captures the hierarchical nature of the Hegelian theory. Contradictions are avoided by expanding the framework of discourse—by adding new categories that explain how it is possible to think coherently of the older ones—and the expansion thus includes the earlier conceptions. The expansion may be seen then as a new "level," including the lower levels. The idea of a level is also appropriate in that it distinguishes the Hegelian theory from other forms of neo-Hegelian idealism that see all the propositions in the theory as implying one another. In this latter view (not apparently the Hegelian view²⁶), truth is coherence, and a system

of conceptions is coherent when each implies the other, that is to say, one cannot be false and the others be true (if one were false and the other true, then the principle that true premises cannot entail false conclusions would itself be false). To use the metaphor of "level" here, we could say that for these other theories, all the conceptions are on the same level—each equally entails all the others, whereas in the Hegelian theory it is not true that each conception entails all the rest. The kind of coherence that is at stake in the Hegelian theory is explanatory coherence. Later categories explain how the earlier categories are jointly possible (they seemed to be impossible because they contradicted each other).

Hegel thus thinks he has presented the principles of his theory in his initial move to the categories of being, nothing, becoming, and existence (determinate being). Contained in that opening section are his views on the nature of philosophical explanation, the relation of philosophy to its history, and the basic architecture of his own dialectical theory. We need now to see how he applies these themes to later developments of the category of being.

III

BEING, EXISTENCE, AND INDIVIDUALS

The difference between being and existence (determinate being) is an abstract one, not a real one.²⁷ "Being" is an abstraction and is not a conception about which one can think coherently when one considers it detached from all the other categories that go to constitute its conceptual meaning. This is the motivation for the move to existence (determinate being). Existence (determinate being) is "*Sein mit einem Nichtsein*," being with a determination through negation. So to speak, it is only an existent as *not*-nothing. The opposite of nothing turns out not to be being, but determinate being (a such and such). Only as determinate being is being not nothing. This constitutes "determinateness as such."²⁸ All further cases of determinateness are to be understood as exemplifications of this pattern. They are justified as solutions to contradictions at a certain level of discourse. Hegel makes a play on the idea of immediacy and claims that as an immediate determination, this is qualitative determinateness. It is "totally simple"²⁹ in the way, for instance, that a red spot and a green spot differ from

each other in this "simple" way. In fact, as Hegel notes, nothing much else can be said about it.³⁰

Hegel gives no clear argument in the section of the *Science of Logic* for why this first, most simple determinateness *must* be qualitative determinateness. The argument is no doubt at best a systemic one. Roughly, it would be that from the conception of qualitative determinateness, one can construct conceptions of quantitative determinateness but not, presumably, vice versa (we shall see later when we look at Hegel's philosophy of mathematics how he goes about this construction).

As an "existent determinateness" (*seiende Bestimmtheit*),³¹ this existent such and such is not-nothing. It is expressed by a conception of *reality*, a set of ideas that, surprisingly, are not the opposite of irreality or nothing but of *negation*. Negation, so Hegel says, is the development of denial [*Verneinung*]. Moreover, negation is "quality burdened with a denial."³²

What is Hegel saying here? He should not be seen as *equating* negation and denial. Denial is the assertion of a negated propositional content, that is, "that (not-p)." Propositional negation, on the other hand, is an operation applied to sentences to produce their opposite. One can have a propositional content, *p*, and then negate it, producing "not-*p*". To *affirm* something is to assert it, that is, to say, "that-*p*"; to *negate* something is to say "not (that-*p*).". Affirmation is the prior idea, negation is an operation applied to an affirmative propositional content, and denial is an assertion (one might say an affirmation) of a negation.

This distinction of negation and denial, though not made by Hegel, nevertheless goes along with the general thrust of his theory, since being is always representative of affirmation, and nothing is representative of negation (they are the predecessors of affirmation and negation). Moreover, Hegel says that negation "belongs to determinate being."³³ This could be construed as meaning that negation is not autonomous but is an operation applied to an affirmative content (that is, existence, determinate being).³⁴ What Hegel tries to do is to develop negation out of the original conflict at the primitive level of being and nothing. If reality is existence (determinate being) — that is, playing the same kind of role that being played earlier—then negation is playing the role that the category of Nothing earlier played. Hegel seems to be using the intuitive prohibition of staying at the level of being and nothing in order to develop his conception of negation.

One way of working ourselves out of the Hegelian maze is to note that there seem to be several senses of "negation" at work in Hegel's theory. We are helped in this by Hegel's own warning to his readers not to think that "negation" is being used in the same sense in all cases: "But in all this, care must be taken to distinguish between the *first* negation as negation *in general*, and the second negation, the negation of the negation: the latter is concrete, *absolute* negativity, just as the former on the contrary is only *abstract* negativity."³⁵

The senses seem to include at least the following. (1) Hegel speaks, as we noted, of *determinate* negation. This is the specific "other" of a conception, the opposing category with which it is to be made compatible; the determinate negation of a category is the specific opposite whose compatibility with the original category needs to be established. (2) There is also the "negation of the negation," which is the category that resolves the contradictions found at the lower level. The idea is that one has a category, then one finds its "determinate negation" (another category that apparently is also valid but that seems to exclude the application of the first one), then one introduces a third category (the negation of the determinate negation) to explain how it is possible to consistently hold to both the (apparently exclusive) earlier categories.

The negation of the negation as the resolution of the contradictions found at the lower level is in Hegelian terms more concrete than the categories at the lower level. The categories at the lower level are seen as contradictions of each other precisely because they are abstracted out of the fuller context in terms of which they acquire their determinateness. In Hegel's theory, "concrete" serves as the stand-in for the "fuller context"; "absolute" seems to function as a stand-in for "self-contained," or "not abstract" (Hegel's use of "absolute" in this context is not really felicitous, since it turns out that many "negations of the negation" are only, as it were, relatively absolute: they *look* absolute in the sense that they seem to satisfactorily resolve the dilemmas at the lower level, but they turn out to engender their own determinate negations, so they are not really absolute).

The first negation of the negation, so Hegel says, is not the conception of becoming nor even that of determinate being but the category of *something* [*Etwas*]: "determinate being is a *determinate being* [*das Dasein ist Daseiendes*], a *something*."³⁶ This is one of the harder passages in Hegel's text to interpret, although the rationale for the introduction of such a category here is clear: it is to introduce the conception of a *plurality* of individual entities. Without such a con-

ception of plurality, Hegel would not really have escaped Parmenides after all. Being might be qualitative being, but why should there be individual entities or, for that matter, why not just a plurality of qualities? For that matter, why not just one quality (what we might call "quality-Parmenidesianism")?

How are we to understand Hegel's arguments here? If Hegel's program is to hold, we should be able to find some kind of internal contradiction in the very idea of "quality-Parmenidesianism" that would justify the introduction of a conception of a plurality of entities. Unfortunately, the arguments to support this reading seem to be lacking. Hegel's arguments for this distinction of being from beings seem to occur in two paragraphs.³⁷ The first one seems to go like this: determinate being is qualitative being; this means that its moments are reality and negation, but the negation in this context must be conceived as itself a determinate being, not as an abstract nothing.³⁸ Thus, one has "deduced" a plurality of beings. But this would seem to presuppose what it is trying to prove: why *must* the "negation" be another entity?

The second argument seems to go like this: the distinction of reality and negation must be integrated [*aufgehoben*] into a coherent doctrine of determinate being.³⁹ The best proposal for doing this is to posit a conception of plurality, of determinate beings. But this supposes that the distinction of reality and negation is inconsistent or incoherent as it stands, and Hegel does not exactly tell us why he thinks that this is the case. One possible way of taking this move is to see Hegel as seeing this simply as a contradiction between this level of the theory and a common-sense assumption of plurality; the transition would then just mark the impossibility of making the common-sense distinction within the language of qualitative determinate being as it stands prior to the introduction of plurality. After all, one of the restrictions that Hegel puts on philosophy is that it correspond to our experience, and our experience is of a world of plural entities.⁴⁰ This would also be one way of taking one of the key passages in the section in which the transition is made: "What is factually the case [*das Faktische*], what is thus present at hand, is determinate being in general, distinction in it and the integration of this distinction."⁴¹ But this would take Hegel as saying that there is nothing intrinsically incoherent about a denial of plurality, only that it does not ultimately mesh well with our phenomenological understanding of the world. This would make phenomenological experience into more than just an external criterion of the adequacy of Hegel's theory, and it would

also go against the grain of what he says about how one refutes another theory.⁴²

The key to understanding Hegel's claim that he has "deduced" the idea of plurality is his distinction of determinate being [*Dasein*] and existence [*Existenz*]. "*Dasein*," it was noted, could also be rendered as "existence." There are two different conceptions of existence in the philosophical tradition.⁴³ One that is often identified with Aquinas and is later represented by the early Heidegger sees existence as something that belongs to individuals. The other sees existence as a property of abstract structures, such as essences or concepts or classes. This latter view is the more dominant conception of existence in the tradition; it is, for example, Kant's view in his critique of the ontological argument. On this latter view, to say of anything that it exists is to say that the concept of it is instantiated or the class has at least one member. The existential quantifier of Fregean and Russellian logic expresses existence by saying that there is at least one x that is Φ (existence statements are general statements—to say that "dogs exist" is to say "among all the things in the world, at least one of them is a dog"). The medieval Persian philosopher Avicenna, for example, held that existence is something that "happens" to essences; replace "essence" with "concept," and Avicenna becomes a modern Platonist who quantifies over abstract entities.⁴⁴

When there are two opposing views of a basic category in the philosophical tradition, it is typical of Hegel to want to hold both of them and to claim that they are in fact compatible with each other. Thus, it would not be unfair to try to see him as attempting to do the same thing here, although it does require a bit of interpretive searching. Fortunately, the interpretive searching is not without some anchoring in Hegel's text. Similar to the way in which Aquinas distinguished being from the act of existence (*esse* from the *actus essendi*), Hegel distinguishes existence in the sense of determinate being [*Dasein*] from existence as an instantiation of some abstract structure, viz., an essence. The latter conception is called by him *Existenz*, and it appears in the section called "Essence," where it is seen as a property of essences, taken as abstract substructures. Hegel uses the ordinary German term "*Dasein*," to express the more primitive conception of existence (the "*actus essendi*"), while he uses the latinate "*Existenz*" to express the more rarefied conception.

This account of Hegel's distinction of two senses of "existence" also has the virtue of fitting in with some of what Hegel says. He speaks of "the simplicity of existence [*Dasein*] mediated through this

integration,"⁴⁵ viz., the integration of reality and negation. He goes on immediately to say, "this being-integrated [*Aufgehobensein*] of the distinction is determinate being's [*Daseins*] own determinateness; it is thus *being-within-itself* [*Insichsein*]." ⁴⁶ Hegel's thesis should then be taken as saying it is in the "act of existence" that being [*Sein*] is distinguished from nothing; in the "act of existence," being becomes a plurality of "somethings." The justification for this claim would be that it is the best explanation for the possibility of the distinction of being and nothing. However, this does not show that Hegel's solution is unique, nor that it is a necessary solution to the problem. It sees it as one speculative answer to the problem, which can only be assessed in terms of the fertility of its results. This may be seen as *Hegelian*—as a fair reading of what is at stake in the texts and what the solution amounts to—even if it is not precisely what *Hegel* thinks. Hegel himself holds this to be a necessary and unique result; it is not at all clear, however, that his own text entitles him to make that claim.

Fortunately, there is a bit more to credit this as a reading of Hegel. He notes that the conception of the "something is still a very superficial determination"⁴⁷ and that "the negative of the negative is, as *something*, only the beginning of the subject . . . it determines itself further on, first, as a *being-for-self* and so on, until in conception as such it first attains the concrete intensity of the subject."⁴⁸ The thinking subject would seem to be a paradigm case of the kind of individual entity to which one might want to attribute existence in this sense (Heidegger comes to mind as an example of somebody who would hold this view). If Hegel did not see *Dasein* in this light, then why would he think that "the something" is the conceptual prefiguration of the subject, unless he was only trying to make the obvious point that people as individual entities in space and time require individuation in the same way as do rocks, lizards, and raindrops?⁴⁹

But how does this answer the question that we are assuming Hegel to be asking, viz., "why is there a plurality of entities instead of just existence (determinate being) in general"? Hegel seems to be saying that the answer cannot yet come at this stage of the *Science of Logic*. He says, "something is equally the *mediation of itself with itself*. Even in the simple form of something, then still more specifically in the being-for-self, subject and so on, self-mediation is present."⁵⁰ It is this "self-mediation" that is supposed to explain why being becomes beings—how abstract, indeterminate being differentiates itself into plural existence [*Dasein*]. This principle of "self-mediation," so Hegel thinks, is not a presupposed ultimate principle that explains every-

thing else but is not itself explained. It is, rather, supposed to be self-subsuming and therefore self-explanatory.

Hegel identifies this principle as being that of dialectical thought itself: dialectical thought comprehends itself at the end of the *Logic* as comprehending its other. Dialectical thought, so Hegel will argue, necessarily involves the thought of plural individuals (a claim that Hegel takes to have found in Kant's work⁵¹). Dialectical thought is a self-subsuming and self-explanatory principle—it is both an instance of itself, and it explains what properties it has by virtue of the properties that it confers on itself in the act of explaining itself. So, it turns out, Hegel has *not* yet actually explained why there necessarily must be a plurality of individuals, despite his protestations to the contrary. His explanation, if it comes, will be circular.

The basic principle has thus not yet been explained (or at least that it has not yet been developed to the point where its reflexively explanatory character is present or has been made clear). At this stage of the exposition it remains a question as to how such a principle could be possible. How can a principle be self-explanatory? We shall see Hegel's answer when we look at his treatment of the categories of thought.

We might ask questions about the implications of this doctrine that Hegel himself was in no position to ask. Does this view of *Dasein* commit us, for example, to the belief in the necessity of singular terms in referring to entities? Probably so, since Hegel would have to hold that the being of a "something", of an *individual* cannot be captured adequately in a general statement (I shall ignore the possibility that Hegel might opt out for saying that language is simply inadequate to express such conceptions). Is Hegel committed to holding that existence is a predicate? Probably not. He is committed to the view that existence in this sense of *Dasein* (and not *Existenz*) is peculiar to individuals, but this need not be tied into any particular theory of predication that sees existence as a first order predicate (as a predicate that some objects can have or fail to have—it was this idea that Kant attacked in his criticism of the ontological argument). We can see this to be the case by looking at how this view of determinate being (existence) propels the further moves of the category of the "something".

The idea of a determinate being—an existent — yields the idea of a plurality of existents. Hegel expresses this by speaking of the conceptions of "something and an other." He explicitly ties in the "otherness" of individuals to the use of indexicals (terms whose ref-

erence varies with the context of their utterance) such as "this." What counts as the other depends on which individual was picked out by "this."⁵² Each individual is a potential other to another individual from the standpoint of "external reflection," of actually picking out individuals in speech.⁵³ Now, Hegel's text on the idea of something and its other is not exactly among the most easily read texts in the history of philosophy. In it, he speaks of the alteration of something into its other, of the finite's passage into the infinite, and the like. He says, for example, "The other simply by itself is the other in its own self, hence the other of itself and so the other of the other—it is, therefore, that which is absolutely dissimilar within itself, that which negates itself, *alters* itself."⁵⁴ More clarity, even on Hegel's own terms, would be appreciated.

Hegel's point may be reconstructed as something like the following claim. In order for us to pick out individuals by terms such as "this," there must be determinate, distinct individuals for us to pick out (one might be tempted to think that individuals on Hegel's view must have the predicate, "being," attributed to them in order for us to identify them as distinct individuals; this is, however, not Hegel's claim). The being of these individuals is not absolute; individuals do not have being as a predicate or a property that makes possible our reference to them. This kind of conception of the being of individuals is intelligible only in the context of a larger frame of reference, which Hegel calls the infinite. The argument for it is something like the following. We have a scattered plurality of individuals, and there is no intrinsic way to distinguish one individual's *being* individual from another's *being* individual; ascribing some kind of absolute being to each of them in order to explain this possibility will not work.⁵⁵ The individuals (the "somethings") in this scattered plurality have two moments:⁵⁶ (1) being-in-itself [*Ansichsein*], what the individual in its self-identity is; and (2) its being-for-others, its distinctness in relation to other somethings (expressed, even if trivially so, by indexicals such as "this" and "that"). Moreover, these individuals alter, come to be, and pass away (this coming to be and passing away recapitulates, so Hegel thinks, the movement of "being" and "nothing").

Hegel apparently accepts Aristotle's theses about alteration, coming to be and passing away, viz., that every alteration presupposes an underlying substrate of alteration, and the substrate must be different from the altering thing itself (theses that are taken up by Kant in the first "Analogy" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to show that alteration requires the postulation of substance to make it possible).

On this view, the coming to be and passing away of individuals does not consist in their acquiring and then losing the so-called attribute of existence. Rather, the underlying substrate (matter for Aristotle, substance for Kant) acquires or loses some property.⁵⁷ Hegel takes up this Aristotelian and Kantian idea and considers how it might be possible to speak of individuals' altering, coming to be, and passing away without any conception of a substance or matter that underlies the alterations. Such a view would for him be one that introduced a conception of explanatory substructures to account for things and would thus be what he calls a "reflected" move and would belong in the "Doctrine of Essence." (I shall return to this point later when I discuss Hegel's conception of essence.) An infinite series of alterations is described by Hegel as the "bad infinite"; it cannot explain the possibility of alteration *together with* the existence of a plurality of individuals. Only a background, a substrate of alteration that is the "true infinite," can explain this possibility. The background or substrate of alteration is the basis on which we understand the alterations of various individuals.

Two things are then necessary to understand the conception of the being of individuals (their *Dasein*): (1) the underlying substrate that provides the background for the scattered plurality (the affirmative infinite, in Hegel's words); and (2) an individualizing factor, which is provided by things (in Hegel's terminology, "somethings," or more generally, the finite). The *determinate being* of an individual consists in its membership in this background (the finite, as Hegel says, is possible only by virtue of its inclusion in the infinite). The being of individuals is thus their presence in the substrate of alteration (their presence in the infinite). Moreover, it is the need to give a coherent account of this substrate that will motivate the move from the "Doctrine of Being" to the "Doctrine of Essence" (for, as Hegel argues, if we think of Being as the substrate of qualitative and quantitative existence [*Dasein*], then it loses any determinateness itself, and we are returned to the beginning, to the doctrine of abstract, indeterminate being; at this point, either the theory oscillates forever in the self-contradictory loop of the "Doctrine of Being," or, in order to avoid the contradiction, the theory is enriched by a new kind of explanation—a new dialectic of sorts).⁵⁸

Why, however, would Hegel want to argue that this background should be something general like the infinite, instead of something more specific, like space and time? Why not claim that it is space and time that function as the universal substrate in which "somethings"

come to be, pass away, and alter? Hegel has reasons that are critical to his project and to the specific categorial scheme that he is proposing. We can see this by putting his theory in an anachronistic context. First, although space and time are necessary for our ability to refer to individual entities, Hegel would not want to base his theses concerning the being of individuals on any doctrine of how it is possible that we *refer* to individuals at all. For him, that would (1) involve bringing in too many presuppositions (for instance, about the thinking, speaking subject who refers and about the whole set of entities to which we can refer); and (2) it would transform his project into an epistemological one. Hegel, however, conceives of his *Science of Logic* as a nonepistemologically based theory, indeed one that undercuts the very possibility of epistemology; and (3) it would remove one of the basic reasons why the *Science of Logic* has to be complemented by a philosophy of nature. It is precisely the need to have space and time as the concrete substrate of coming to be and passing away that prompts the extension of the *Science of Logic* into the "philosophy of nature."

Hegel's general strategy for excluding space and time from this section can be seen by a quick look at where his argument about the being of individuals is going. His strategy is first to construct the logic for speaking about individuals, then show how that logic requires for its explanation a conception of an infinite. This infinite is at first conceived qualitatively, as an infinite series of changes and alterations. We have examined this part of the argument. Hegel will later argue for a quantitative conception of the infinite, as the idea of limits that can be made as arbitrarily small as one pleases. The categories of space and time turn out on the Hegelian conception to be forms of the more general category of quantity. To the extent, then, that the qualitative idea of the being of individuals is shown to require a move to the category of quantity, Hegel's theory quite naturally leads to a doctrine of space and time as the substrate in which the being of individuals consists.⁵⁹ Space and time are the concrete infinities in which individuals exist.⁶⁰

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that Hegel's program is not a foundationalist one. He is not concerned to lay down principles that are certain or indubitable and then build on that. Rather, he is concerned to show that certain ways of thinking require a complement by other sets of conceptions in order to be coherent. The picture that best fits Hegel's scheme is not that of a foundation with structures erected on it (and then further structures erected on them), but one

of types of thought and discourse being embedded in larger frameworks of thought and discourse, with the latter being necessary to explain the coherence of the former. Hegel should not be taken as denying that we need spatial and temporal ideas in order to refer to individuals, only that the more primitive ideas of individual existent entities do not make use of the idea of reference (as we shall see when we look at Hegel's theory of the judgment and the syllogism, he not surprisingly holds that such basic individuals can *only* be referred to, *monstriert*⁶¹).

IV

THE ONE, THE MANY, AND CLASS CONCEPTS

The doctrine of being, then, is a theory of how it is possible to say of individuals that they exist. "Being" as a category may be characterized as the sphere of difference, *Anderssein*, as Hegel would put it. Qualitative difference, however, is not the only category of being as conceived as a collection of individuals. Quantitative difference plays an important role, and it is to that we now turn.

It is in Hegel's discussion of quantitative difference that he introduces his philosophy of mathematics. Hegel's reputation is at its worst here. Besides the many other blunders he is supposed to have committed, Hegel is supposed to have done particularly badly in his philosophy of mathematics. Russell is reputed to have said that it was Hegel's stupidity in mathematics that drove him away from Hegel's philosophy altogether. It is not clear, however, just how close a reading Russell actually gave to Hegel's philosophy of mathematics. In Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* the only references are to Hegel's *Encyclopedia* version of the "Logic," not the detailed *Science of Logic*.⁶² The *Encyclopedia* version contains even less than the outline for Hegel's thoughts on the matter. Moreover, in his *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* Russell suggests that Hegel is one of those philosophers who ignored developments in mathematics and clung to the belief that the differential and integral calculus required the postulation of infinitesimal quantities.⁶³ One of the largest sections of the *Science of Logic*, however, is spent attacking the idea of the infinitesimal.

Hegel's alleged idiocy in mathematics and mathematical philosophy is one of those enduring legends that continue to circulate among

those who have not read him. Hegel's philosophy of mathematics is indeed flawed, and some of the reasons for its taking the shape that it does are dependent on accepting the fine details of Hegel's whole program. His writings on it are also hard to decipher, since his arguments often seem to leave out premises, and one must often simply guess what he means in using a certain type of argument. However, since the legend of Hegel as the mathematical dunce lives on at least in some circles, it is worth looking at his theories about mathematics, if for nothing else, to see what light it throws on the rest of the program, and in particular how it affects his theory of the quantitative determinateness of individuals.

Nevertheless, some caveats have to be mentioned in discussing Hegel's reasoning concerning his philosophy of mathematics. He followed the tradition of his time in his assumption that the elements and principles of mathematical thought were those related to quantity and number. Russell is helpful in his criticism of this tradition, pointing out that more recent developments show that a whole set of mathematical ideas must be defined without reference to quantity.⁶⁴ Moreover, for algebra and analysis one does not need the idea of quantity but only that of integers, which can themselves be defined in set theory. There are also newer branches of mathematics that deal neither with quantity nor with number, such as projective geometry and group theory.⁶⁵ To make matters worse for Hegel, the traditional quantitative conception of measurement to which he appeals is not necessarily tied up with a conception of quantity per se.

Hegel's philosophy of mathematics proceeds in two distinct stages, although the discussion of it mostly occurs in the section of the *Science of Logic* called "Quantity." His strategy is first to develop a series of nonquantitative conceptions in terms of which he can then reconstruct the quantitative ones. His underlying goal is again a speculative one: he is concerned with providing an explanation of how mathematics is possible. In particular, he is interested in how mathematical plurality is possible (how it is possible to say of two things that they are not only qualitatively different but also numerically different). Just as one of his major concerns in the section on "Quality" was with showing how a plurality of entities was possible, his concern in the section on quantity is with the question of how quantitative plurality is possible.

At the end of the section on "Quality," Hegel claims to have generated the conception of what he calls being-for-self [*Fürsichsein*]. This being-for-self is understood by Hegel in three ways: (1) it is the infinite taken as a totality of existent entities; (2) it is the infinite taken

as explaining the determinateness of the various finite entities; (3) in the limiting case it is also *for-itself* in that it should explain its own determinateness (the second and third of these themes occur more explicitly in the section of the *Science of Logic* called the "Doctrine of Essence").

Since the determinateness of the various existent entities is explained by the "infinite" taken as a single totality, they are said to have a "being-for-one" (they are the "many", the totality is the "one"). Hegel even coins a term for this, *das Eins*, to indicate that he is speaking of a type of unity, a nonquantitative unit (in distinction from the quantitative one, *die Eine*). As a unit it is an individual, but such a unit would be different from an existent individual (a *Daseiende*); it would not be capable of alteration, since there would be no substrate of alteration against which it could be said to alter.⁶⁶ It could not be said to come to be or to pass away, since it is the substrate in which coming to be and passing away are themselves possible.

Hegel clearly thinks that such a conception implies a conception of many such ones, but it is not clear just what his reasoning for that is. It could be that he is noting only that the idea of a totality of existent entities does not *a priori* exclude the idea of another totality of other existent entities (perhaps in the manner in which the idea of a self-enclosed universe is seen by some not necessarily—or at least not self-evidently—to exclude the idea of multiple self-enclosed universes). Each one would be infinite in the sense of being self-enclosed, and this would not exclude the idea of a multiplicity of such infinities.⁶⁷ However, Hegel is not at all clear on this point. He speaks of the origin of numerical plurality resting in the one's relation to itself being a relation to an affirmative being but being also negative in character and hence being a relation to an other. But one infinite self-enclosed totality certainly does not *imply* the existence of other such totalities, even if it does not exclude their possibility. Yet Hegel's argument for the existence of many ones seems to be that the conception of an infinite self-enclosed totality implies many such totalities. Even the most sympathetic readers of Hegel can find difficulty in this transition.⁶⁸

The transition is, however, reminiscent in another way of Russell's discussion of the class as one and as many.⁶⁹ Hegel talks about the relation between the one and the many as a relation between the whole (the totality) and its members, the same language Russell used. The class as *one* is the class considered as an abstract entity with mathematical properties of its own. For example, the class of all copies

of Hegel's *Logic* has some properties in set theory that the heap of all copies of Hegel's *Logic* would not have. The class as *many*, however, is the class considered as consisting in its members; two classes are identical if and only if their members are identical. The class as one is like Hegel's conception of *das Eins*. The class as many is like Hegel's conception of the many ones (taking that is, the members of the class only in terms of their cardinality; the class of all copies of Hegel's *Logic* could, for example, have the same cardinality as the class of all copies of Hegel's *Phenomenology*). The tension between the one and many is then similar to that between regarding the class as one and regarding the class as many.⁷⁰ From this, Hegel attempts to derive the conception of things that are only quantitatively distinct from each other. If one can define the difference of two items ($x \neq y$) by saying that there is a class, Φ , of which x is a member and y is not a member, then one has a way of generating the conception of numerically distinct units (units whose difference from each other is not necessarily a qualitative one).

Hegel defines "quantity" through the conceptions of continuity and discreteness. His use of "continuity" is not, it should be noted, identical with the more modern mathematical conception of continuity. Russell himself remarks on this, giving Hegel the benefit of the doubt (in one of the few places he does so⁷¹). He notes that "continuity" and "discreteness" in Hegel's usage denotes the opposition of unity and diversity in a collection.⁷² If this is the case, however, then talking of continuity would only be another way of talking of the one, and discreteness would only be another way of talking of the many. In fact, this is the way Hegel uses these conceptions to define the concept of number. The general idea behind Hegel's thoughts on number is easy enough to state (in its intuitive form, at least): quantitative magnitude (infinitely large and "continuous", as the "one" is taken to be) may be arbitrarily divided up into many units (the infinite many, the "one" conceived as arbitrarily broken up into discrete units), and we may come up with individual numbers by counting these units. This supposedly explains how both numbers and the various combinations of them (such as addition, subtraction, and multiplication) are possible, although the actual construction of such combinations (or even the variety of them) is, Hegel correctly notes, not itself a matter of philosophy.⁷³ Hegel thus defines number as the amount of units (of ones).⁷⁴ (It of course never occurred to Hegel that he could use the concept of a class to define numbers in this way—that the number "two" could be defined as the class of all two-membered classes.)

However easy it is to state the intuitive ideas behind Hegel's philosophy of mathematics, his exposition of them is still hard to follow. He thinks, for example, that the conception of magnitude (by which he presumably means our conceptions of "greater" and "less"⁷⁵) is more basic than our conception of number. If that were the case, then we should be able to define numbers in terms of relations of greater or less, but Hegel in fact defines numbers in terms of counting *amounts* of units, not in terms of any kind of ordering relation.⁷⁶ His idea seems to be that in defining numbers, we look at units, count them up and then assign names to the various results (such as "one," "two," etc.); the number "five" is thus defined as "five ones." The amount of such units is the number (amount is the aspect of "oneness," the discrete units are the aspect of "manyness"). "Five" is thus more than "three" in that "five" contains a greater amount of "ones" than three does ("five" is of a greater magnitude). Yet he also seems to think that numbers are generated not just by counting up ones but by applying certain kinds of operations to relations of greater and less (that leads him to say in opposition to Kant that arithmetical truths are only analytic, since once the operations are fixed, their results are fixed⁷⁷). He also holds the belief that our conceptions of greater or less are prior to our conceptions of equal or unequal.⁷⁸ Presumably, he means that we can define the inequality of numbers by reference to some prior conception of magnitude (" $x \neq y$ " would be defined as " $x < y$ or $y < x$ " and equality—" $x = y$ "—would be defined as the negation of inequality—"not- $x \neq y$ ").⁷⁹ Whatever one thinks of this procedure, it is clearly not the only procedure available for generating the concept of number. Nor might it be the most fruitful one for purposes other than fitting mathematical conceptions neatly into the framework of Hegel's specific conception of the *Science of Logic*. Hegel's solution here is most certainly not the only one available, and his claims of necessity for it are therefore implausible.

V

THE MATHEMATICAL INFINITE

Hegel distinguishes two ways in which the infinite may be conceptualized, which he calls the "spurious" and the "affirmative" infinite. The spurious infinite is the infinite conceived as some sort of existent entity; it is called "spurious" because the infinite is falsely conceived

as a thing that can be reached by following an infinite series out to its end. To see the infinite in this way is to finitize it, to make it a finite infinite, a contradictory idea.⁸⁰ Nor should the infinite be conceived simply as a potential infinite, a limiting condition, something becoming and never completed (what Hegel calls the "progress into infinity," another form of the spurious infinite⁸¹).

The affirmative infinite would be the actual infinite (since the rational, so Hegel says, is always the actual⁸²). The actual infinite is not an entity that one would reach at the end of an elapsed infinite series. It is the movement itself of the series, expressed as a representation of what would happen if the series were to be carried through (in this way, Hegel apparently wishes to resolve the opposition of the potential and the actual infinite). The best conception of the infinite is one that sees it as a moment in the *unity* of the finite and the infinite; the infinite is something that exists in a certain relation to something else, the finite.⁸³ This restates the points that Hegel made in speaking of the being of individuals, that a conception of their alteration necessitated a substrate of the alteration, which he identified as the infinite. The substrate is thus not conceived as something independently existing (such as Aristotelian matter) but as the totality in which individuals gain their determinateness as individuals.

The affirmative mathematical infinite would, like the affirmative qualitative infinite, be a ratio between two terms—in Hegel's terms, two quanta, each determined by the other and determined only in this ratio [*Verhältnis*] to each other. The problem with understanding what Hegel means by this lies in the fact that Hegel supplied his full explanation of what he meant by his talk of "relations of quanta" in a set of extended remarks rather than in the regular body of the text.

Hegel's thoughts on the mathematical infinite are worth looking at in some detail, since they are an almost paradigmatic use of his dialectic and his basic ideas. In particular, they are a good example of the importance of translating "*Begriff*" as "conception." In the remark, Hegel is defending a particular conception of the infinite that he thinks is implicit but nonetheless undeveloped in the mathematics of his time. Moreover, he defends this conception against the metaphysical conceptions of the infinite popular among philosophers and philosophical critics of the mathematical infinite. He also thinks that this conception that he will defend is not the explicit conception that the mathematicians have formed but one that explains better the concept they have developed. In particular, Hegel argues that the idea of the infinitesimal as a conception of the infinite is terribly flawed

and is not really the conception of the infinite with which the mathematicians are working.

Hegel's treatment of the mathematical infinite parallels his treatment of the infinite in general. He is not concerned with all the problems of the infinite that one finds nowadays treated in mathematical analysis but only with the idea of the infinitesimal as it appeared in the differential and integral calculus. The mathematical infinite is found where one has a representation of a numerical sequence that seems to proceed to an infinitely small or infinitely large amount. His particular concern is with series that proceed to an infinitely small amount and are said to require *infinitesimals* in their solutions. An infinitesimal would be a quantity that is infinitely small, a number that is greater than zero but smaller than any other finite number. It is abundantly clear that Hegel has only the lowest estimation of this conception of the infinite. In the extended "Remarks" on the subject, he heaps nothing but scorn on the view that mathematics requires such quantities for its equations.⁸⁴ To hold to the doctrine of the infinitesimal, he claims (echoing D'Alembert), is like holding that there is a midpoint between being and nothing.⁸⁵ Russell's statement to the effect that philosophers influenced by Hegel would be compelled to accept the idea of the infinitesimal is not only false but seriously misleading about the nature of Hegel's philosophy. The idea of the infinitesimal is only another example of one form of the spurious infinite, viz., treating the infinite as an entity of some sort to be reached by following out an infinite series to its end.

To understand Hegel's worries on this matter, we must understand a bit of the background against which he was writing (a background that Hegel himself also lays out in his "Remarks"). There had been in Hegel's time great developments of the analysis of the infinite by people like Euler, which dealt with the sums of infinite series, their transformations from one form into another, and so forth. However, there was little or no concern with the foundations of various areas of mathematics.⁸⁶ Instead, mathematicians were concerned with devising solutions to problems and not with conceptual or foundational questions in their disciplines. Foundational questions were discussed only when it was necessary to solve a problem, not otherwise.⁸⁷ By and large, this was successful, since no great contradictions or scandals in mathematics had been uncovered that demanded such foundational inquiry.⁸⁸

Gradually, however, more and more mathematicians began to turn their attention to foundational questions.⁸⁹ In the controversy

among the followers of Newton and Leibniz regarding the calculus, the British mathematicians and defenders of Newton tended to defend the geometrical rigor of Newtonian calculus against what they saw as the less rigorous algebraic infinitesimals of Leibnizian calculus. This defense of geometrical rigor naturally led the British to explore foundational questions more than did their continental counterparts.⁹⁰ In this context, it was, interestingly enough, the Newtonian, British conception of the infinite that Hegel took himself to be defending.

The turn to foundational questions was fueled by the attacks that philosophers had made on the basic ideas of the infinite in the mathematics of the time. The most famous attack came from Bishop Berkeley in *The Analyst, or a Discourse Addressed to an Infidel Mathematician* (addressed, interestingly enough, to Edmund Halley, famous for the comet that bears his name).⁹¹ For example, Berkeley attacked the eighteenth-century understanding of the concept of a limit. Assume that $y = f(x)$ and $y = x^2$; for the resulting ratio, $f(x + \Delta x) - \Delta x/\Delta x$, as Δx gets smaller, gradually going to zero, $2x$ was said to be the *limit* of the ratio. Newton called this kind of thing a "last ratio," a piece of terminology that Hegel also took up. The limit was the value of the ratio at the last instant of time before x vanished. Berkeley pointed out what he took to be the absurdity of taking $2x$ to be a limit in this sense: if $x=0$, then the original ratio would be $0/0$, which is absurd; or if $x>0$, it would simply not be true that $2x = (2x + \Delta x)$.

For example, consider an ordinary infinite series, such as $1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} + \frac{1}{8} \dots$. What is the sum of this series? It would seem natural to say that it was 2. However, it never actually is 2, it only *approaches* 2. 2 is the *limit* of the series, the value it has "at infinity," but 2 is not *part* of the series. Yet there was a large body of mathematical literature that seemed to hold just that: certain equations, it was said, required the idea of an *infinitesimal* in order to make sense of the idea of the limit of a series. The infinitesimal would be an infinitely small number that was itself part of the series. As the series, $1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{4} \dots$ goes on to $1/n$, n gets progressively larger and the ratio of $1/n$ gets progressively smaller. The infinitesimal would be the last element in the series before it reaches its limit; the difference of the sum of the series and 2 would be the infinitesimal. It was this idea that philosophers like Berkeley attacked. The infinitesimal represented, so Berkeley said, only the "ghosts of vanishing quantities."⁹² It was just not true that the sum of the series ever was 2; it was very near to 2, but it was not equivalent to 2.

In response to the charge of inexactitude, many mathematicians took one of two stratagems: some said that since the quantities in-

volved were so small, the approximations were enough, and we did not need to worry;⁹³ infinitesimals were so small that if added to a regular number, they could be ignored, but they were large enough to serve, for example, as the denominator of a fraction. Others (Carnot and even Newton) tried to provide methods in which other errors were made that canceled each other out. Not only did these two ways of dealing with the criticisms arouse the ire of mathematicians like Lagrange, they seemed to Hegel to be a particularly inappropriate way to pursue mathematics, since they confused a common-sense toleration of inexactitude in measurement with the clarity and rigor demanded of mathematics. Hegel sided with mathematicians such as Lagrange in his attempts to make the calculus more rigorous, to attain the rigor of geometry, the "rigor of the ancients" (Lagrange's famous phrase, also quoted by Hegel).⁹⁴

Hegel's discussion of the matter was thus part of a general discussion among philosophers and mathematicians of the time about the conceptual soundness of the idea of the infinite as it had been developed in the calculus. As we noted, Hegel defended what he took to be the mathematician's implicit conception against the philosophical and metaphysical skepticism of the philosophers about this conception.

On the basis of suggestions by Lagrange, the Berlin Academy of Science proposed a prize competition in 1784 for "a clear and precise theory of what is called Infinity in mathematics."⁹⁵ The results were disappointing, and this prompted Lagrange and others to begin reflecting on, among other things, the foundations of the mathematics of the infinite. Lagrange's *Fonctions analytiques* in part resulted from this and had a profound influence on Hegel, as is evident in Hegel's discussion. Much of what Hegel says seems to be taken from Lagrange's discussion. For example, Lagrange criticizes the idea of the limit in terms similar to Berkeley's; Hegel picks this up, sometimes citing Lagrange, sometimes not. Lagrange objected that the prevailing notion of a limit considers quantities "in the state in which they cease, so to speak, to be quantities."⁹⁶ Hegel makes a very similar charge, using similar language.⁹⁷ Hegel also cites Lagrange's idea that we have no clear and precise idea of a limit that is the ratio of two finite quantities when the terms of the ratio simultaneously become zero.⁹⁸

Hegel also sides with other criticisms by Lagrange against Newton, specifically that Newton's calculus makes too much use of concrete ideas such as velocity, and we simply do not have any clear idea of instantaneous velocity. Hegel could not help but be buoyed by the convictions on the part of Lagrange — convictions shared by Berkeley,

although it is not clear that Hegel read Berkeley on this point—that Newton’s introduction of motion (indeed, of space and time in general) was improper in mathematics. This would have lent credence to Hegel’s exclusion of the topics of space and time from his *Science of Logic*. However, Hegel defends Newton’s idea against Lagrange’s skepticism about limits. He gives Newton credit for his doctrine of fluxions (vanishing divisibles), which Newton himself called limits, noting that Newton had also correctly pointed out that one may not infer from final proportions to proportions of final magnitudes.⁹⁹

Indeed, it is this faulty inference, so Hegel thinks, that underlies the misconception of what is really at stake in the mathematical conception of the infinite. An infinitesimal would be such a final magnitude, but as Hegel notes, properly conceived, it would be false to call it a magnitude at all. Newton’s “final ratio” was supposed to be a ratio of disappearing magnitudes. Hegel thought that ironically implicit in Lagrange’s own solution was the correct resolution to what was already implicit in Newton’s idea: to devise a method in which the limit of a series could be made as arbitrarily small as one pleased.¹⁰⁰ It is in *functions* of variable magnitudes that the true mathematical infinite is to be found, not in the conception of an infinitesimal. The actual infinite in mathematics is not a “thing,” not even an infinitely small number; it is *expressed* as a relation of variables, as a *function*. The conception of a function, so Hegel thought, allowed us to represent the infinitely small without having to postulate that at any point we reach some peculiar infinitely small number or infinitesimal.

As Hegel put it, one should not take the elements of the Newtonian “final ratio” as having any meaning apart from their place in the ratio. In the equation, $dx/dy = P$, both dx and dy should not be taken as “quanta.” In Hegel’s words, “it is solely in their relation to each other that they have any meaning [*Bedeutung*], a meaning merely as moments.”¹⁰¹ They are to be taken only as moments of the relation, as determinations of the differential coefficient, dx/dy . As Hegel puts it, in the Newtonian idea of the limit, dx and dy are to be taken only as *moments* of dy/dx , which “must be regarded as a *single indivisible symbol*” (emphasis added by me).¹⁰² The limit is to be the limit of a given function.

Hegel gives this, however, an odd twist. He claims that Newton’s conception of limits should therefore be interpreted as *qualitative* determinateness of ratios of magnitude. The mathematical infinite is really a qualitative conception, not a quantitative conception at all. What did he mean by this? There is good reason to believe that the

impetus for the idea came from Leibniz.¹⁰³ But his real argument seems to have to do with his idea of quantity as such. The basic determinateness of quantity is that of magnitude, of something that can be increased or diminished. The infinite, however, cannot be either increased or diminished. Therefore, the infinite cannot be said to have any magnitude. If it has no magnitude, then it cannot be a form of quantity. What has no quantity must therefore be qualitative in character. Therefore the infinite is qualitative in character. (Hegel would therefore apparently have some difficulty with the Cantorian idea of different orders of infinity.¹⁰⁴)

This might seem like just so much slight of hand unless we reflect on Hegel's reasons for believing that careful reflection on the infinite drives us to this conclusion. In his attack on the "spurious infinite," Hegel thought he had shown that the infinite cannot be properly conceived as a "thing," as itself a member of the infinite series. The infinite is not *part* of the infinite series, not a value that one would reach if we extended the series "long enough." This also seemed to him to be true in mathematics. Hegel would have quite obviously worried about the claims that the idea of the infinitesimal is indispensable in mathematics (and correspondingly, physics) and would have been worried about the conflict between sound science and mathematics and his philosophy if this were true. Thus, he was at pains to show that a good understanding of the operations of the calculus did *not* in fact make indispensable use of the idea of the infinitesimal.

Hegel thought that by showing that the mathematical infinite was a qualitative idea that he had thereby shown how the "indifference" of quality and quantity had been overcome, and had thus opened the way for a new step in his dialectical theory. We need not be as sanguine about this as Hegel was. If nothing else, it rests on the idea that the infinite does not itself permit the attribution of "greater" or "less" to itself. Since Cantor, however, this idea cannot be taken as an assumption. However, we do not need to accept Hegel's idea that the mathematical infinite is qualitative in order to appreciate the core of what he had to say about the matter. Indeed, Hegel might have been buoyed by the interpretations that modern mathematical thinkers such as Weierstrass gave to the infinite. The by now familiar idea, for example, that the limit does not belong to the series that it limits would no doubt have a certain charm for Hegel, since it was an idea that he himself defended. The force of Hegel's criticisms of the concept of the infinitesimal is, first, that one need not posit a special entity

(the infinitesimal) to explain how it is possible to think consistently and coherently about the infinite; and, second, that the infinite can be expressed as a mathematical relation, not as an odd type of number on its own. (Of course, Hegel would not be pleased with the rise of nonstandard analysis, in which the notion of the infinitesimal has made its reappearance. He would no doubt side with those philosophers and mathematicians who view this with only the greatest suspicion.)

Hegel's philosophy of mathematics is, unfortunately, not helped by his penchant to want to include everything in it, and this penchant no doubt explains part of the bad reputation he has gained in this area. He advances, for instance, a theory of quantitative ratios [*Verhältnisse*] in which he ranks them according to the rationality of the types of unity that they exhibit. His grading is (from less rational to more rational): (1) direct ratios: $a/b = c$; (2) inverse ratios: $a \times b = c$; (3) ratio of powers: $a^a = c$ (this is the most rational because here the quantum is "immediately its own self and also its otherness"¹⁰⁵). This is, however, so idiosyncratic to Hegel's system that it offers little insight to anyone who has not accepted the entire Hegelian outlook—lock, stock, and barrel.¹⁰⁶ It is not one of the things that even Hegelians have seen fit to develop, and there is good reason for this lack of interest.

VI

RELATIONS OF MEASUREMENT

Hegel introduces the last part of his theory of mathematics—his theory of measurement as the application of quantitative conceptions to qualitative features of the world — on the basis of a spurious contradiction. He claims that because the mathematical infinite is expressed non-quantitatively, it must therefore be a qualitative feature.¹⁰⁷ This is a contradiction, so Hegel thinks, since quality and quantity are supposed to be indifferent determinations (redness remains redness no matter how large or small the red object is and no matter how many red things there are), but it turns out that they are not. However, as Russell pointed out, there are a multitude of other things in mathematics that do not use the idea of quantity but are not because of that qualitative matters (except perhaps in some highly idiosyncratic use of the word).

Hegel here seems to confuse there being genuinely conceptual issues in mathematics—such as how we conceive of the infinite—with these issues being qualitative and not quantitative ones. That is, he seems to presuppose that if the issue is not to be resolved merely by solving equations but by constructing new conceptions of what these equations are about and new conceptions of equations themselves, then it must be the case that it is a question of qualitative features of mathematics (this being another statement of the view that what is not quantitative must therefore be qualitative). Had he realized, however, that the category of quantity does not exhaust the realm of mathematical thought, he most likely would not have reached such a conclusion.

In order to make the transition that he wants to make, he would have to be able to show that one cannot speak intelligibly about mathematical symbols without applying them to make measurements, and it is at least dubious if Hegel or anyone else could show such a thing. The real rationale for the move to the section on measurement seems to be systemic in character. Entities have both qualitative and quantitative features, and it is in measurement that the two features of entities are combined. Without a theory of measurement, something would be left out of the theory. Furthermore, Hegel cannot resist the idea that measurement is the unity of quality and quantity, the integrating third to the opposition of quality and quantity. It fits too neatly into his teleology of explanation for him to forgo it. These systemic considerations, however, do not detract from Hegel's remarks on the subject; they merely cast doubt on the so-called logical necessity of the transition.

The more interesting part of Hegel's concern with measurement is his speculative concern with how measurement is *possible*. How can we explain the possibility of the stuff of the world's being made measurable? Insofar as we wish to apply mathematics to the world, Hegel argues, we must convert the purely mathematical relations into relations of measurement. This is done by constructing ideal norms as to how matter ought to behave. For example, in collisions of (ideally conceived) undisturbed bodies, we hold that when the collision is repeated, the respective ratios will remain the same. This is the ideal norm, and the symbolic manipulation of the ratios is itself a mathematical task. These norms themselves, however, are neither construction rules for the mathematics of the situation, nor are they just stipulated definitions, nor do their statements involve simply the manipulation of symbols. Relations of measurement, therefore, form

a type of conception irreducible to the categories simply of quality or quantity.

The result of seeing how mathematical conceptions determine qualitative ones is a mathematics of nature, possible only through measurements.¹⁰⁸ Hegel catalogues the various kinds of measurements that can be made, again making his claim that with each type of measurement there is a contradiction propelling one to a new level of measurement. The various alleged contradictions are, however, difficult to find here.

CHAPTER THREE

Explanation by Essence and the Alternative to Realism

I

FROM BEING TO ESSENCE

The “Doctrine of Being” in Hegel’s *Logic* concerns the explanation of the possibility of speaking of the being of individual entities. The motor for Hegel’s explanation is the necessity to distinguish abstract, indeterminate being from nothing. This distinction is accomplished in the passage from being to existence (*Dasein*). In Hegel’s view, we distinguish being from nothing in our coming to conceive it as an existent individual. To be an individual consists in being present in a substrate (which Hegel calls the infinite); individuals, moreover, are either qualitatively or quantitatively determinate individuals. The logic of being consists then of the various logics (or dialectics, to use Hegel’s terms) of qualitative and quantitative determinateness. In order to progress to the next type of explanation, Hegel must show that the entire logic of being itself involves some kind of contradiction or incoherence that it cannot resolve in its own terms.

Hegel claims that the result of such a dialectic is that the category of being becomes indifferent to its determinations. To be is to be a qualitative or quantitative individual, but being per se cannot be identified with just this qualitative or quantitative existence. Why? Existence implies the notion of alteration, coming to be and passing away,

and this requires an unchanging substrate in which this alteration, coming to be and passing away, occurs. Being as the "infinite" is just this substrate. What then can one say of this being, if one cannot identify it with qualitative or quantitative determinateness? Apparently, one can say nothing about it, but this means that being has become indifferent to its determinations (Hegel makes a punning play on the German term for indifference, *Gleichgültigkeit*, noting that as "equivalent to itself" being is literally *gleichgültig* and thus has an *Indifferenz* to its determinations¹.) The only label for a category of being that is indifferent to its determinations is that of pure being.

The dialectical movement has therefore ended up where it began, with the category of abstract, indeterminate being, which, as we know, is equivalent to abstract, indeterminate nothing. The doctrine of being thus finds itself in an infinite loop of sorts: one begins with pure being, finds that one cannot distinguish it from nothing, proceeds to the notion of individual existence in qualitative and quantitative terms in order to make this distinction, and then ends up with a category of pure being. The dialectical movement thus moves in a circle, in a kind of progress that Hegel describes as the "bad infinite." Going in circles is not necessarily a bad thing, except that the circle in question is irrational, since it ends in a contradiction, viz., that between saying that being is different from nothing and is the same as nothing. The particular loop is a contradictory one. This presents Hegel with a new type of dilemma with which to deal. Rather than finding that a specific pair of categories seem to be incompatible, he finds that the entire movement of the "Doctrine of Being" is self-contradictory. Either one stays in the logic of being, with its infinitely recurring contradictory loop, or one must move to a new kind of explanatory logic (a new dialectic of sorts) in which one can avoid this contradiction.

If the loop were not contradictory, then there would be no reason to go on to a new logic. Since the motor of the dialectic is the avoidance of contradiction, and the "Doctrine of Being" ends with a contradictory loop, we are required, so Hegel thinks, to make the speculative leap to a new logic, which he calls "Essence."² This is a logic of substructure/superstructure relations, where the substructure explains the determinateness of the superstructure. Being has thus emerged as the indifferent substructure of the various forms of determinateness of existent individuals. It is the "essence" that explains all the various superstructural moments of itself. Moreover, the substructure is said to "reflect" itself in its superstructure. Just as the transitions in the "Doctrine of Being" were all versions of "passing over" (*Übergehen*),

the transitions of the "Doctrine of Essence" will all be versions of this "reflection."

Hegel is not as clear as he could be as to what reflection is, but the point of the category can be extrapolated from his general program. The "Doctrine of Essence" is concerned above all with the question "Must essence (the substructures of the world) appear?" As Hegel sees the matter, any number of philosophers from Aristotle to Kant have posited the existence of substructures to explain the elements of appearance but none have really explained what the link between the substructures and the superstructures must be. A *realist* would have to hold that we cannot say whether or not certain substructures appear to us. Although it is perhaps odd to think of Kant as a realist, he is nonetheless a prime example of this kind of realism. If we cannot know what things are in themselves, then we cannot say that there are or are not some things in themselves that do not appear; thus, things in themselves need not appear to us.

Hegel apparently holds it to be meaningless that there could be things (substructures) that need have no relation to appearance.³ The goal of his *nonrealist* alternative is to give an explanation of why it must be the case that the substructures have some (at least possible) cognitive relation to appearance. The section of the *Science of Logic* called the "Doctrine of Essence" is concerned overall with two large themes: (1) the exploration of what realism entails and why realism is untenable; and (2) what bearing this has on Hegel's doctrine of the being of individuals.⁴

The category of reflection is the main conceptual tool with which Hegel reconstructs the various categories of "Essence" in his exploration of the possibility of realism. *Reflection* is the relation of the substructure to the superstructure; it is also described by Hegel as a *positing* relation.⁵ The relation between the substructure and the superstructure is an explanatory one: the former explains or "posits" the latter. On Hegel's view, the principles of reflection not only should explain the determinateness of the superstructures but should also ideally explain the determinateness of the substructure and their own determinateness. They should, that is, be self-subsuming explanations. It will turn out, however, that they are not fully self-subsuming, that they fail to realize their goal. This failure will be the reason for moving to the "Doctrine of the Concept."

If we think of explanatory structures as having at least two items, an *explanans* (*p*) and an *explanandum* (*q*), then a self-subsuming explanation would be one in which *p* not only explains *q* but also explains

itself (a limiting case of this would be where q is p itself).⁶ In Hegelian terms, p explains the determinateness of q . What explains the determinateness of p ? Either it is another *explanans* (r), or it is either p itself or some feature of p . If it is p itself, then whatever it is about p that explains the determinateness of q should also explain the determinateness of p itself. If p is not only a self-subsuming principle but also a reflexive principle, then p 's determinateness will be such that any statement of it intrinsically refers to itself. It will apply to itself by virtue of the feature that it bestows on itself in its applying to itself (in a way similar to the way in which, for example, "this phrase here" refers to itself in virtue of a feature that it has by virtue of referring to itself).

Hegel's talk of essence's "return into self" refers to the self-subsuming character of essence.⁷ Hegel is, as it were, asking if there is an essence of essence. If there were (call it X), and X were distinct from essence, then one would want an explanation of X (by Y). One would then want an explanation of Y (by Z) and so on. More prosaically put, Hegel's concern is with the endless positing of substructures to account for substructures, *ad infinitum*. The "essence of essence" ought to be itself an essence. The principles of explanation that are used in explanation by essence ought, if they are to be complete explanations in the Hegelian sense, to explain themselves. (It was in part this deficiency in self-explanatory character in the logic of "being" that motivated the move into "essence."⁸)

His line of reasoning throughout his discussion of essence is difficult to follow, but its lineaments can be picked out. There are two moments present at this level of exposition: mere appearance and the substructure that is to explain it. These are not two different entities; that would be the way in which we would have to conceive of them at the level of the "Doctrine of Being."⁹ Instead, they are moments of the same entity: one of the moments is the mere appearance (the illusory being, as Miller renders it) of the underlying essence or substructure. This moment of mere appearance should therefore be said to be posited by the underlying substructure. Whatever features there are to be found in mere appearance are to be explained by the substructure, and the nature of this substructure should be such that it *must* posit a superstructure. His argument thus seems to be the speculative one that (1) the indifferent being that is the result of the "Doctrine of Being" is identical to what essence is, viz., a substructure that posits superstructures; and (2) that seeing it as this best explains the possibility of its being what it

has in fact turned out to be, a substructure.¹⁰ The category of pure being that began the *Science of Logic* turns out to be the underlying substructure of the world.

Is this enough to show any kind of per se internal incoherence in the realist position? Perhaps it shows that realism does not cohere well with the results that Hegel has thus far attained, but that is far from a demonstration of the kind of internal incoherence that is supposed to be the driving force of the *Science of Logic*. Hegel says, "But it does not have to be shown that mere appearance, in so far as it is distinct from essence, integrates itself and returns into essence . . . all that has to be shown is that the determinations that distinguish it [mere appearance] from essence are determinations of essence itself and further, that this *determinateness of essence* that mere appearance is, is integrated in essence itself."¹¹

It is important to note that Hegel does not say that he will *prove* this. He uses the word *zeigen* (rendered as "shown") in the above quote rather than some stronger term, such as *beweisen*, "demonstrate." His argument seems therefore to be that he can provide an explanation of how it is possible that one could have an account of essence (of substructures positing superstructures) that is not internally incoherent or inconsistent on *its* own account. His argument must therefore be not that the alternative is burdened with some fatal internal contradiction. His argument must rather be that his account is superior to the other alternative explanations in that it does not leave anything left over unexplained. If essence can be shown to explain mere appearance and to explain itself, then that is a better theory than one that holds that there is mere appearance but cannot explain the link between mere appearance and its underlying substructure.

Alternatively, Hegel's claim might be taken as saying that the realist, having by hypothesis accepted the "Doctrine of Being," must now accept the consequences of that line of thought. She must admit that the substructures of which she speaks are intelligible only in contrast to mere appearance, and that without some intelligible link between the two, her conception of an essence that does not appear is incoherent. But this, too, does not show that the realist's position is internally incoherent, only that it is incoherent if it makes the further assumptions that Hegel makes. Hegel's argument at this stage thus falls short in its attempt to show that realism is internally deficient in the strong sense in which Hegel intends (if that is indeed taken to be his goal).

Once again, we are faced with an interpretive decision with regard to Hegel's texts. The strong claim of the necessity of the failure of realism cannot be made out. If we take the Kantian element (the "science of reason") to be essential to Hegel's program, then we are faced with what is perhaps the breakdown of the program. However, if we take the explanation of possibility to be essential to the Hegelian program and downplay the Kantian element (however strongly Hegel stresses it himself), then this need not be fatal to his program. It may be taken simply as the attempt to show how a nonrealist conception of the world would be possible through the speculative construction of a nonrealist set of categories. In this sense, Hegel has not so much shown the necessary failure of realism as he has constructed a coherent alternative to realism. If realism is to be shown to fail, then a stronger argument against its explanatory power must be given.

II

FROM MERE APPEARANCE TO APPEARANCE

The stronger argument against realism may be reconstructed by considering Hegel's other motivation underlying his treatment of essence. This is his view that being is distinct from nothing in being existence, determinate being, specifically, the existence of individuals. What he thinks he has done at the conclusion of the "Doctrine of Being" is show that such a view is not tenable *at that level*, viz., the level of the "Doctrine of Being." The view *per se* concerning the existence of individuals is tenable, he thinks, but a vocabulary richer than that of the "Doctrine of Being" is required in order to make the view acceptable. The "Doctrine of Essence" begins with an examination of the view that the various determinations of being as existent individuals are mere appearance (*Schein*), and that the real is the abstract substructure that explains these appearances.¹² His criticisms of the realist point of view are intended to discredit this view as internally incoherent.

His strategy for doing so is to argue that if essences must appear, then realism (in the sense in which Kant's doctrine of the thing in itself exemplifies a realist position) will prove to be untenable. Hegel's theory of essences aims at showing that the ways in which essences reflect themselves in appearance is best explained by a theory that

undermines this kind of realism. He thus focuses on the types of reflection that his theory allows. Given his view of the nature of the existence of individuals, an explanation of how it would be possible that essence must appear must also depend on showing how it would be possible that essence reflects or "mirrors" itself in the existence of individuals.

His thoughts on the matter, however, do not begin auspiciously. Reflection, so Hegel says, is "the movement of nothing to nothing and so back to itself."¹³ This is, well, an unfortunate way of putting it; moving from nothing to nothing will not produce something.¹⁴ His further comments only inch us along to get at what he is trying to say: "the other that in this passing over comes to be, is not the nonbeing of a being but the nothingness of a nothing, and this, to be the negation of a nothing, constitutes being."¹⁵ His special sense of "negation" is a good clue to what he means here, since he takes the movement to be one of negation in his special sense. Thus, we can take his points to be the following. First, we should look for some form of negation. We find that in the idea that the substructure, the essence, posits its superstructure, an existent individual. It is not that nothing posits nothing, as Hegel seems to say. Second, given that we have the negation (in the special Hegelian sense), we should also find the "negation of the negation." And indeed we do. The self-subsuming nature of the principles of reflection are the negation of the negation. They are supposed not only to explain the "other"; they are also supposed to explain themselves.

We can generalize: in the "Doctrine of Being" the negation of the negation is the third conception that integrates the logic of the first two, thus showing them to be compatible and not really contradictory categories. In the "Doctrine of Essence," on the other hand, the negation of the negation is not a third conception but is the original conception with which one began.¹⁶ Conception A explains conception B and also explains itself.

What seems for Hegel to be wrong with a realist doctrine is that the realist can make no link between the structure of essence and the structure of the world of appearance. Kantians, for example, can make no statement about how the structure of things in themselves relate to the structure of appearance. Hegel's argument is hard to disentangle here, but it seems to turn on the idea that in order to say that a substructure posits a superstructure, we must be able to relate the *content* of the substructure to the *content* of the superstructure. Without this kind of connection, one cannot even say that there is a *positing*

of one by the other at all. If that is accepted, then Kantian realism is incoherent, since it rules out precisely such a relation.¹⁷ This seems to be Hegel's main argument against realism, and it is stronger than simply the speculative alternative discussed above.

Hegel takes this argument to be a derivation of the principle of sufficient reason. That principle states that every truth has a reason, the German term for which is *Grund*. We may take this as being equivalent to the proposition that for every truth, there is an explanation.¹⁸ Hegel renders that into his way of speaking as: "what *is*, is not to be regarded as a merely *existent immediate* but as something *posited*."¹⁹ Although this principle is self-subsuming (there must be an explanation for why everything must have a sufficient reason, if the principle is true), it is not self-explanatory (it does not explain why everything must have a sufficient reason). Hegel takes his derivation of the conception of essence to be such an explanation. The conception of essence is required in order to escape the infinitely self-contradictory loop of the "Doctrine of Being." One explains essence by reference to the conception of reflection. This conception of reflection then implies that things be seen as posited by underlying substructures (essences). Thus, the principle of sufficient reason is explained by the principles that require us to move from the proto-contradiction found at the level of "being" and "nothing" to more complex categories.

But is this really an explanation of the principle? It is only if one views the principle of sufficient reason as being explained by the principle "All things should be viewed as mediated" (to use the shortened formulation he uses in the *Encyclopedia*²⁰). But if we are to take Hegel at his word and see the principle of sufficient reason as equivalent to his formulation of it, then his alleged explanation only reformulates it. "All things should be viewed as mediated" is just a different way of stating the principle of sufficient reason, not a way of explaining the principle.

Hegel's real explanation of the principle has to lie in his idea that this principle, like all others, is ultimately to be explained in terms of what he calls dialectical thought. We can phrase this as two tasks: (1) whether the principle of sufficient reason is indeed equivalent to Hegel's principle that all things should be seen as mediated; (2) whether Hegel can offer a satisfactory explanation of this principle in terms of dialectical thought. Hegel's "Doctrine of Essence" may be taken as an extended argument for an affirmative answer to the first question,

and his "Doctrine of the Concept" may taken as an extended argument for an affirmative answer to the second.

To see if the first task is met, we need to look at Hegel's further arguments concerning the categories of "Essence." He distinguishes between various kinds of ground. An absolute ground, Hegel says, is one that not only explains the grounded ("posits it") but also explains itself (is "self-positing"). Essence as explaining existence looks as if it is an example of such an absolute ground. Indeed, it seems to follow from Hegel's explication of it in terms of reflection. In Hegel's terms, the movement of reflection must be such that it mediates itself (that it "posits" itself). In an absolute ground, the reflection — the relation between the substructure and the superstructure — must be both self-subsuming and self-explanatory. Unless Kantian realism is to be accepted, the relation between the substructure and the superstructure must be such that the substructure is not beyond our ability to comprehend it. Hegel asks himself, how would it be possible that (1) the substructure posit the superstructure and (2) that the substructure not be beyond our cognitive grasp. Only if the relation between substructure and superstructure is linked by a relation of reflection, so Hegel thinks, would these two conditions be met.

Since the substructure and superstructure must be linked, it follows that "essence must appear."²¹ If "essence must appear," then the possibility of realism is thoroughly undermined. The appearance of essence is its appearance as a world of existent individuals. Hegel's views on this kind of existence (*Existenz*) remain the same as his views on the more basic notion of existence (*Dasein*); it is a feature of individuals, not of abstract structures.²² True to his compatibilist program, Hegel tries to provide for both views of existence in his system of categories. The more basic conception of existence is that of *Dasein*, qualitative or quantitative existence. The claim that this conception of existence could be understood only when set against an unchanging background — called, abstractly enough, the "infinite"—is now refined in the "Doctrine of Essence" into the claim that the being of individuals requires an explanation by substructures (essences). This is no longer the notion of a brutally existing individual (a *Daseiende*), but an existent individual that is posited by (and thus explained by) a more basic substructure.

This is a reconstruction of a very dense part of Hegel's text. Hegel says many different things in various passages in the *Science of Logic*, and it is difficult to sort them out. One of the things that makes Hegel's

thought often so hard to follow is his proclivity for testing out various hypotheses without telling us that this is what he is doing. This failure of textual pedagogy on his own part is partly to be explained by his view of the nature of his system. Such hypotheses are stages on the way to the complete explanation, and it would be rash, on his view, to announce in advance that any one of them is doomed to failure (in this way, Hegel's dialectic is indebted, no doubt self-consciously, to Socratic dialectic). Hegel finally comes to reject the view that the being of individuals is to be explained by reference to essences, but he also believes that until one has seriously entertained the view that it can be, one cannot understand why it cannot.²³

In this light, Hegel offers what he calls an "analysis" of and not a "transition" to his conception of a thing and its properties.²⁴ He comes to reject this view, although he regards it as an attempt at explanation of the existence of individuals from within the standpoint of what he calls "Appearance," a type of explanation in which the link between the substructure and the superstructure is fully explicit. Explanation in terms of "Appearance" might be thus called nonrealist explanation, since the substructure is not taken to be beyond our cognitive grasp. Thus, if one redescribes the most basic conceptions of the being of individuals (of qualitatively and quantitatively distinct somethings) into the language of "Appearance," the "something" of the "Doctrine of Being" becomes redescribed as a thing with its properties. Instead of the conception of a thing with its specific makeup (its purely qualitative and quantitative features), one has the category of a thing (*Ding*) that is the underlying substructural ground of its properties.²⁵ It is the difference, as it were, between describing something as a glassy white rock and describing it as something that has the sensible properties of glassy and white because of its underlying crystalline structure.

The individual thing has two features: (1) it is the substratum of a set of properties, that to which the properties are ascribed (this corresponds to the thing as that which is referred to by the subject of a judgment); and (2) it is the explanation of why it has these properties and not others (this corresponds to Locke's notion that the properties "flow from" the essence of the thing). This conception of a thing is thus a "reflected" conception (in Hegel's sense) in that it involves this distinction of a substructure, a superstructure and a positing relation between them. Hegel argues that such a conception of a thing is a vacuous idea, however laudable its pedigree. If the

thing is different from its properties, then it cannot be defined in terms of its properties. But in terms of what else can it be defined? The result of trying to define a thing independently of its properties is a conception of a thing as that of a *Grundlage*, a substratum and not a *Grund*, an explanatory foundation of the properties. It becomes simply a support of the properties, that in which they inhere, not that which explains them. Its role would be just to signify the "indeterminate unity" of the thing, "the oneness of something" (*das Eins des Etwas*).²⁶ It is Locke's "I know not what" that underlies the phenomenal properties.

Hegel even toys with trying to explain away the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself in terms of this conception of a thing. The thing-in-itself is, after all, also an "I know not what," beyond our cognitive grasp. But since it is beyond our grasp, we cannot state what the explanatory connection is, and consequently the conception of the thing-in-itself is vacuous. In fact, Hegel argues, if one follows out the line of reasoning that makes the thing into a Lockean substratum, one finds that the conception of the thing degenerates into that of an "inessential surrounding [*Umfang*]" of its properties, a mere "this," a totally nonexplanatory dispensable conception.²⁷ This conception of the thing contradicts its explanatory intent; it is meant to explain the unity of the properties, but it fails to explain anything at all.

This conception of the thing alone will not explain the unity of phenomenal properties that one encounters in experience. Hegel proposes a second hypothesis to do this: the unity of phenomenal properties is to be explained by their being the posits of general phenomenal laws; the general laws produce the unity of the phenomenal properties, and we rely on the general laws to explain their unity. We could think of each thing as having the mere appearance (*Schein*) of being an independent self-subsistent entity, but the truth of the matter is that individual things are posits of a more general background of natural laws.²⁸

In testing out this conception, Hegel seems to be conceiving of laws as phenomenalist correlations of items of appearance. They are, he says, "not beyond appearance but immediately *present* in it."²⁹ The system of laws should then not be conceived as a hidden substructure but as available within the structure of appearance itself (this nicely mirrors the earlier conception of finite entities being explained by their existing in an unchanging background of the infinite, the picture found in the "Doctrine of Being").

Hegel argues that, like the others, this hypothesis also runs into trouble. To think of phenomenalist laws as explaining the properties of things in this manner requires us to ask how the laws themselves are to be explained. If we are given a law that states, for example, that sugar dissolves in water, then we will want an explanation of why that law itself holds (an explanation in terms of crystalline structure might, for example, fill the bill). This in turn requires us to think of the laws as ultimately belonging to a consistent system of laws (for example, many particular laws being derivable from some more general and basic set of laws). If we do that, we will need the category of a whole and its parts in order to interpret the relation of a system, its laws and the individuals in the system. The whole is the phenomenal aggregate of things, and the laws are the correlations of these phenomenal things taken as a whole. The individual existent is just a part of a larger whole, and the system of laws describe the way in which the whole and the individuals in it typically behave. If we do this, we will have to postulate forces to hold such a "mechanical aggregate" together.³⁰ Forces, however, are not items found in appearance nor are they equivalent to correlations of items of appearance; rather, they are substructural elements that explain the unity of appearance. Nonetheless, although forces are conceptually linked to appearances in a way that makes them knowable, they remain substructural elements.³¹

This is a reconstruction of the main lines of the arguments found in the section of the *Science of Logic* called "Appearance." I have taken Hegel's goal in that section to show that a realist view is untenable, since the categories that would make it possible turn out to be untenable. Realism must hold that it is possible that the world in itself is different than the world that appears to us. Hegel's arguments try to show that the conception of a nonappearing substructure is not tenable. He does not think that realism is just outright nonsense. Realism emerges as the solution to the kinds of dilemmas engendered by thinking of very abstract things, such as the relation of being to the world of existent individuals. It thus has a kind of relative rationality to it; realism solves some problems that emerge out of other strands of thought, but it engenders its own characteristic set of problems, which it cannot resolve in its own terms. The arguments found in "Appearance" resolve the dilemmas of realism, but they, too, engender their own difficulties. As far as Hegel is concerned, that is a good excuse for keeping the dialectic flowing.

III THE ACTUAL WORLD

Hegel's arguments against realism in favor of his nonrealist alternative are motivated by what is always a twofold element of the Hegelian dialectic: (1) the attempt to push alternative speculative explanations as far as they will go in order to show their defects; and (2) the arrangement of these various speculative probes in a kind of teleological ordering. In the "Doctrine of Essence" this arrangement consists of the ordering of worse to better integrations of the various conceptualizations of the relation of substructure to superstructure.

Realism fails because it can show no link between the substructure and the superstructure. The superstructural world becomes a world of mere appearance with no knowable link to the substructural world that is supposed to explain it. Realism's explanations thus yield to the better explanations found in the section called "Appearance." Within the categories of "Appearance" are explanations involving the positing of the superstructural element by the substructure, with the substructure being in principle knowable. For Hegel, an even better explanation would be one involving no separate substructural element at all, having instead the explanatory substructure also present in the superstructure. Hegel interprets explanation by phenomenalist laws as an attempt at this. Such explanations, however, end up invoking "hidden" substructural forces. However, Hegel argues, this need not be the end of the story of explanation by law. When these forces are adequately conceived, we will see that they are not beyond appearance but contained in it. Appearance is only their expression. Hegel proposes that we should not think of forces as entities of any sort but as the "essential relations" (*wesentliche Verhältnisse*) between entities.³²

Hegel calls this kind of structure in which laws express essential relations "Actuality" (*Wirklichkeit*). It is appearance as a self-positing system. This category, Hegel thinks, would be the best possible integration of substructure and superstructure. In such an explanation, there would be no explanatory substructure beyond or behind appearance. Rather, the explanatory structures of appearance are to be found within appearance itself. The basic divisions and developments of the categories of "Essence" thus appear as an ordering of stages of realist thought and its breakdown. "Mere appearance" is realism at its extreme, "Appearance" is mitigated realism, and "Actuality" is the full-fledged rejection of realism altogether.

It is in the section called "Actuality" that Hegel tries to show how his thesis about the being of individuals applies to substructure/superstructure relationships. In doing so, he tries to argue for a compatibilist understanding of Kantian and Aristotelian conceptions of substance within an overall Spinozistic conception of substance as self-causing. In the "Doctrine of Essence" the goal of explanation is to show how it would be possible for a substructure to posit its "other" (a superstructure) and in doing so to posit itself. Spinoza's conception of substance comes closest to being an explanation of this type. His substance not only posits all the features of the world of appearance; as self-caused, it also posits itself. However, if the being of individuals consists in being posited by an all-embracing substance, then what is left of the thesis that the being of individuals belongs properly to them?

From Kant, Hegel takes over the idea that substance is a relational concept. There are important differences in how each understands this idea. Unlike the Hegelian conception of substance, the Kantian conception of substance emerges as an answer to problems about how endurance over time is possible. Kant's argument for it (roughly) is that without an enduring thing over time, we could not mark objective time relations; we could not, that is, distinguish our subjective time sequences (the order in which our ideas subjectively appear to us) from objective time sequences (the order in which things follow each other in the world). Time is possible only in a world with alteration in it, but we need something that is permanent (or just endures) in order to be able to mark alteration (as opposed to just succession). Substance is that which makes such marking of alteration possible. The category of substance, however, is only the subject-predicate form of judgment synthesized with time: the subject becomes "that which endures" (substance), and the predicate becomes an accident, "that which alters." Substance is thus injected by us into experience; it is a logical form of judgment that in being temporalized becomes a categorial structure of appearance.

Hegel removes the epistemological form of this argument. Substance is conceived by Hegel as a relation or proportion (the term is *Verhältnis*) among its attributes. To say of anything that it is a substance is to say that (1) it is identical over time, and (2) it accounts for its properties developing the way in which they do. The latter condition is necessary to differentiate this conception of a substance from that of a thing and its properties. The thing is indifferent to its properties (it does not explain why it has such and such properties), whereas a

substance posits its properties. (In Hegel's argument it emerges that there could be only one substance, but there could be many things.³³)

In the Hegelian dialectic, so we have seen, not all transitions are motivated simply by the appearance of a contradiction that needs to be resolved; often the transition is motivated by Hegel's belief that he can show that a more complete explanation is possible. What turns out to be deficient in the lower level explanation is not its contradictoriness, nor even its incoherence, but its *incompleteness*. This conception of substance, being a more complete explanatory conception than the earlier conception of a thing, is consequently higher in the Hegelian teleology of explanation. The substance is both the unity of its properties and their explanation.³⁴ Hegel calls such a conception the absolute: that conception of a substructure that not only posits its superstructure but also posits itself — a self-subsuming and self-explanatory concept. As such, it would not be something behind or beyond appearance but something to be found within appearance. As the unity of its properties, it "manifests" itself in them: "the actual is therefore *manifestation*; it is not drawn into the sphere of *alteration* by its externality, nor is it the *reflecting* of itself in *an other*, but it manifests itself; that is, in its externality it is *itself* and is *itself* in that alone, namely only as a self-distinguishing and self-determining movement."³⁵ (Hegel incidentally notes that this is only an "explication" (*Auslegung*), a "display" (*Zeigen*) of what substance is, not a deduction of the conception.³⁶)

Many philosophers argue for the existence of universals, but few bother to argue that there are particulars. In Hegel's case it would be surprising if he did not at least try to do this. One would expect Hegel at least to attempt some kind of dialectical derivation of the notion of particulars by trying to show that, for example, the idea that the universal substance need not differentiate itself into particulars is an incoherent or self-contradictory idea.

He does make an attempt of sorts at such an argument when he explicates the modalities of substance, in particular, contingency and necessity. There he claims at least that contingency is a necessary feature of substance and that self-positing substance must necessarily posit a world of individual entities interpreted as individual substances. Moreover, it is clear that Hegel thinks that there are such individuals posited by substance. First, he praises Leibniz's theory of monads as having basically the right idea, but in failing to give the "principle of individuation" its "deeper statement [*Ausführung*]," Leibniz's philosophy fails as a piece of speculative philosophy.³⁷ Second,

in speaking of causality, Hegel claims that there are many substances that interact causally with each other.³⁸

Hegel's question thus seems to be: given a conception of substance as the "absolute," how is it possible that there can be distinct, real individuals (how is it possible, that is, that monism and pluralism are compatible³⁹)? His specific way of putting the problem, which he picks up from Kant, is to explain how it is possible to accept both the unity of the causal relation and the independence of the relata (how, that is, to combine causal necessity with the logical independence of cause and effect). His attempt at a speculative answer to this involves seeing actuality as a causal system, and his argument seems to be something like the following. To try to speak of necessary individual causal relations is hopeless; à la Hume, one cannot find any. All one can find are correlations of individual things in constant conjunction. To look for necessary causal relations at this level is futile, since if successful, such a search would leave us at best with what Hegel takes (mistakenly) to be analytic propositions (such as "rain causes things to be wet").⁴⁰

Hegel's speculative solution is to make causality a systemic conception. To say of any two things that they stand in a causal relation is to locate them in a unitary world system. In Hegel's terms, it is to locate them in the self-identical substance of actuality. To speak of causal relations would then be to describe an ongoing set of regularities, a world order, which is composed of individual substances interacting with one another.⁴¹ The interaction is a causal one when one can show, for example, that without the interference of X, the system would have such and such a configuration. Causal relations thus are of the form: system S would end up in state Φ but for the intervention of X, which resulted in its ending up in state Θ . What counts as a cause and what counts as an effect is thus relative to its location in the system.⁴²

The substance of the world is thus articulated as a system in which various causal relations function as moments of this system. Causality is thus a *Verhältnis*, a relation or proportion between logically independent substances in a world order, and the world as the substance of everything is that ideal order depicted by our mappings of it as a causal system. Substance is the ideality of the particular substances that interact within the order. Causality as a category consists in the mapping of the law-like system of the world. On Hegel's conception of it, causality thus requires both independent substances and a background order in terms of which they are necessarily related.

Without individual substances, one cannot have causal relations, and without some conception of a background order, one cannot order the relations of individuals in any way that could be said to be causal.⁴³

This conception of a substance that posits itself as positing its other—as being an explanatory ground that is self-subsuming and self-explanatory—is Hegel's candidate for the best possible category of essence. The world as a unitary system posits itself through the kinds of causal relations that make it up.

However, this turns out not to be the best possible explanation, for it necessarily involves us in a self-contradictory loop similar to the one found at the end of the "Doctrine of Being." Substance (the absolute) is said to posit the various determinations of itself, which turn out to be individual substances involved in causal relations with each other. What, however, is the content of this underlying substance itself? If it is said to be simply identical with the whole system of causal relations, then it cannot be said to be explanatory of them. If it is different, then it is impossible (given the way Hegel has set up the system of arguments) to say exactly what it is. It becomes an unknowable thing-in-itself, and the individual things of the world become the mere appearances of an underlying explanatory substructure. Such a conception, however, returns one to the beginning of the "Doctrine of Essence," viz., the categories of "mere appearance" and "essence." The dialectic of the "Doctrine of Essence" thus ends up in a self-contradictory loop, and the process of explanation by substructure starts over again. This can be overcome, as it was in the "Doctrine of Being," only by moving to a new level of explanation that avoids the dilemmas of the earlier one. Hegel calls this new level "The Concept."

CHAPTER FOUR

Thinking About Thought

The kinds of two-tiered explanations found in the "Doctrine of Essence" are superior to the very primitive explanations found in the "Doctrine of Being." Nonetheless, they fail to be complete, self-contained explanations. These kinds of substructure/superstructure explanations motivate a move to a new type of explanation in terms of totality structures. Hegel calls the level at which these explanations proceed that of "The Concept." In such explanations, one does not attempt to explain the phenomenal elements of experience by reference to some underlying substructure that posits them. One explains them in terms of some system of which these elements are a part. These systems or wholes are represented by the conceptual maps that we make of the experienced world.

In Hegel's teleology of explanation, the "Doctrine of the Concept" presents us with what he takes to be the first instance of a fully self-subsuming and self-explanatory structure. The "Doctrine of Being" constitutes the weakest form of explanation, in which we explain what things are in terms of their qualitative and quantitative features. In the "Doctrine of Essence" the underlying substructure was taken to posit the superstructure and in the ideal case also posit itself: it would thus ideally explain itself in explaining its other. However, only the kinds of items found in the "Doctrine of the Concept," so Hegel argues, adequately do this. Spinozistic substance, although it is described as being self-causing (that would make it self-positing in Hegel's terminology), does not adequately explain itself or its accidents.¹

Moreover, because of its articulation of the self-positing nature of "the concept" (or "conception as such," as I have sometimes awkwardly translated it), the "Doctrine of the Concept" is said by Hegel to contain the proper categorial structure for understanding freedom.²

There is also a systemic reason for Hegel's transition to the "Doctrine of the Concept." Hegel's teleology of explanation demands not only that an account be given of the basic categories of experience (what he calls the "objective logic," composed of the "Doctrine of Being" and the "Doctrine of Essence") but also that an account be given of the account. Not only must the possibility of the categories of being and essence be explained, the possibility of the categories of thought itself must also be given an explanation. That is, not only must the *Logic* develop the categories of "things", it must also develop the categories that characterize the thinking that uses the categories of things. Categories such as "inference," for example, apply to thought and not to things.

Hegel's line of thought seems to be this: if the logic of categories of objects has been given—if thought has moved through all the possible coherent positions regarding the categories of objects—then for completeness the theory is now required to provide an explanation of how it is possible that it can establish the categories that it has thus far laid out. We need now to look at how Hegel lays out his arguments about these totality structures.

I

INDIVIDUALS, CONCEPTS AND UNIVERSALS

The first part of the "Doctrine of the Concept" is taken up with Hegel's views on formal logic. Hegel's theory of logic (in the more usual sense of the word, not in his special sense) may seem on first reading to be one of the least promising parts of his theory. First, it relies on pre-Fregean and pre-Russellian conceptions of the nature of formal logic and the shape it ought to take. For many, that will make it *prima facie* suspect as an account of logic; at best, Hegel's views could then have only an antiquarian interest. Second, Hegel's treatment can give the impression that it rests on the error of confusing logic proper with metaphysics and epistemology (an error that has been attributed to one of Hegel's great influences, Kant³).

A closer reading of Hegel's reflections on logic present, however, a much different picture. What emerges is that Hegel came to see many of the difficulties in traditional logic that propelled Frege to undertake his new beginning in logical theory. Hegel himself, however, did not fully understand just how much these were difficulties in the logical tradition and how much were difficulties with logic per se. What is instructive in looking at his views is the light it throws on how he understood formal logic to fit in overall with his own dialectical "logic" of categories.

The object of study in Hegel's *Logic* is not things but *Sachen*, the import or matter of things. These *Sachen* are identified with basic conceptions or, more precisely, categories. In the philosophical tradition categories were generally conceived as highest genera, and one moved from a category (a general concept) to the individuals that embodied these categorial predicates by adding specific differences to the category. One went, for example, from the concept of animal to that of dog by adding the specific differences that distinguished dogs from other animals. This view rests on the assumption (rampant in traditional logic, according to some⁴) that one moves up the ladder of generality from individuals to genera by abstraction. The move from an individual to a species to a genus is simply one of increasing generality. The idea (roughly) is that one starts from an individual (Jones), abstracts from his particular characteristics to reach the concept "man," and from there by increasing abstraction moves to more general concepts such as living thing, spatio-temporal object, and entity in general.

What belies such a picture is the crucial disanalogy between individuals and all the other concepts. How does one move from an *individual* (Jones) to a *concept*, that is, to a classificatory expression (for instance, "man")? (In English at least, there is also the syntactical disanalogy of the various categorial concepts from other concepts: from "X is red," one can move to "X is colored" but not to "X is a quality"⁵). Just what are we doing when we put categories into some kind of ordering relationship: are we ordering entities or are we ordering concepts?

Traditional predication theory attempted to answer some of these questions by distinguishing different ways in which predicates applied to the subjects. In the case of nonessential predication, the predicate was held to inhere in the subject (this was the explanation for the invalidity of: Jones is red; red is a color; therefore, Jones is a color). Essential predication was believed to constitute an identity of some

sort between subject and predicate; the most ambiguous formulation of this was Locke's dictum that the predicate "flows" from the subject.

Frege claimed that traditional predication theory failed to solve its many problems because it could not distinguish between two different kinds of predications: (1) individuals being subsumed under concepts, and (2) concepts being subsumed under one another. Classical theory could not distinguish, for instance, between class membership and class inclusion. Instead, as the metaphor of the ladder of generality shows, all the kinds of predication were generally assimilated to the relation of concepts being subsumed under one another. This meant, among other things, that the traditional theory of predication could not distinguish unit classes from individuals (it could not distinguish, for example, the class of German philosophers named Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel from the individual, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel).

Because traditional predication theory did not make this distinction, and because it was obvious that individuals were not either singular concepts or unit classes, it was naturally pushed to saying that the copula must express some form of identity between individuals and their essential properties. Leibniz's theory of monads—of radical individuals—is one outcome of this view. If one holds that the distinction between essential and accidental properties is not easily made, then it is natural to hold that all properties are essential—especially if one is also skeptical of another distinction crucial to classical predication theory, that between universals and particulars, as Leibniz also was.⁶ One could easily think that any idealist, particularly one with the bad fortune to live before Frege's critique of the tradition, would be particularly prone to the failure to distinguish individuals being subsumed under concepts from concepts being subsumed under one another, since idealists notoriously identify things with mentalistic entities.

Interestingly enough, Hegel makes a similar distinction between individuals and concepts.⁷ His chapter headings reveal as much: in the section on "The Concept" the three chapters are called, respectively, "The Universal Concept," "The Particular Concept" and "The Individual [*das Einzelne*]." Hegel's thoughts on this are difficult to unravel (surprisingly so, since he regards his theory of the nature of conceptions to be the linchpin of his whole theory). Part of the difficulty lies in his use of the terms "universal" and "concept"; they are used by him in a way that most English-speaking philosophers (and unfortunately also many German-speaking philosophers) will find

unfamiliar. I have been over this already, but it is perhaps wise to stress the point again.

For Hegel, a *Begriff*, a conception is different than a representation (a *Vorstellung*).⁸ I have argued that we should understand Hegel's use of *Begriff* as expressing the idea of a conception in distinction from a concept. A concept is nonexplanatory and is expressed by a term; this corresponds to Hegel's sense of "representation" (*Vorstellung*). A conception is explanatory and is expressed by a proposition. This corresponds to Hegel's use of "*Begriff*." Conceptions express particular beliefs within a system of beliefs. A conception is supposed to explain the determinateness of the things that fall under it, whereas a representation of something does not explain anything at all. The representation, for instance, of a dog does not explain anything about the dog. What makes Hegel's usage seem so odd is that it of course follows that in his terms many ordinary concepts are not even concepts at all but only representations. Hegel denies in at least one place that ordinary language and thought—nonphilosophical thought—have any concepts *at all* in them! They use only representations!⁹ That is a clear tipoff that Hegel is using "*Begriff*" in a special sense and not in the ordinary sense of "concept."

Unfortunately, Hegel is also not completely consistent in his use of the terms. If he always used "*Begriff*" to mean "conception" and always used "*Vorstellung*" to mean "concept," then there would be no problem. However, he does not always distinguish clearly between concept and conception in his own writings. This is partially to be explained by the fact that Hegel used the term, "*Begriff*" to express what others had used in the sense of "concept" and which he used in the sense of "conception." Hegel often upbraids other philosophers for not recognizing the "true" nature of concepts. Sometimes he even calls a nonexplanatory concept—a concept in ordinary usage — an "empty" concept.¹⁰ What he means by these charges is that mere agreement in concepts does not mean that we can agree on conceptions, and that conceptions are always more concrete than the abstract concepts of which they are the conceptions. Knowing the meaning of a concept per se does not help one answer interesting questions about that concept. Just knowing how to use the word "justice," for example, does not mean that one can adequately answer questions about how far justice requires a more nearly equal distribution of resources. Knowing the meaning of the word "space" does not get you any closer to deciding on the validity of Einsteinian or Newtonian

conceptions of space. In order to answer the interesting questions about justice or space, one must develop particular conceptions of them.

There is another good piece of evidence for taking Hegel's idea of *Begriff* to be a conception. One form that conceptions (in this Hegelian sense) take is the form of a universal, which Hegel takes to be something like the intelligible *system* to which an individual belongs, a system that explains the determinateness of the individual conceptions in it.¹¹ For example, when we speak of what is entailed by the conception of an individual right, we must bring in a whole cluster of other conceptions (of the proper function of the state, of the relation of law and morality and so on). We are not merely asking for the features that all usages of the words "individual rights" have in common (assuming that we could even give them). We are asking, rather, for an explication and defense of the various conceptions that are the moments of the conception we have of an individual right. For example, when it is used in an explanatory sense, the conception of a genus is for Hegel a universal (as when one explains that an animal has such and such an organ because it is a mammal). Thus, although to the usual Anglo-American philosopher "redness" would be a paradigm case of a universal, in Hegel's somewhat eccentric use of these terms, it is neither a universal nor even a "concept" at all — it is merely a general "representation." This seems to indicate that Hegel has something like our idea of "conception" in mind. It will, however, be difficult to translate consistently *Begriff* as "conception," since in some places Hegel quite clearly means "concept" in the more ordinary sense of the term. Nonetheless, either "concept" or "conception" would be preferable to the usual translation of *Begriff* as "Notion."

There is a further kind of rationale for Hegel's eccentric usage and for identifying Hegel's *Begriff* with the idea of a conception. The "universal" is Hegel's term for the category of a self-subsuming, self-explaining principle; it refers to a system that ideally both explains the determinateness of the particulars within it and explains itself (it is a self-positing system, in Hegel's terms). Hegel holds that the only sense that can be given to such a conception of a self-subsuming, self-explanatory principle is one that sees such a principle as one whose self-reflexiveness consists in its referring to itself by virtue of properties ("determinatenesses") that it bestows on itself in the act of referring to itself. Why is the universal then not merely some trivially self-

referring set of words, such as “this very phrase”? The Hegelian answer seems to be that such a conception of the universal would not be the ideal case of explanation. A richer conception of the universal would see it as referring to itself by virtue of properties that it bestows on itself in virtue of bestowing some properties on others, and *because* it is richer, this conception is on Hegelian terms the preferable one. The universal thus seems to be a principle that subsumes itself (1) as the category that classifies itself as classifying a set of other categories (it is a member of itself; it belongs to the class of all basic categories that categorize other basic categories); and (2) as the category that explains the determinateness of all categories and thus explains its own determinateness. Moreover, its self-reflexivity depends on its referring to other categories than itself.¹² But since only thought can be self-reflexive in this way, universals are categories of conceptual thought.

One of the things that Hegel denies is that one can draw a hard and fast distinction between such universals and particulars. The universal as the explanatory principle of determinateness posits the particular; an integrated system of conceptions explains or justifies a particular conception. The universal is therefore not an entity that underlies the particular (that would make it a category of the “Doctrine of Essence”); it is the systemic conception that includes the more particular conceptions within it. Things are particular by virtue of certain characteristics that they have, but these characteristics are explained by the universal system to which they belong. Hegel seems to think that even those items to which he refers as mere representations, such as “blue” or “cat,” are to be explained by some systemic conception of them. Even if one explains such and such features of a cat by reference to some underlying substructure (such as, for instance, its genetic code, although for obvious reasons that would not be Hegel’s example), that substructure itself is to be explained by reference to some systemic conception that subsumes it.

Neither the conceptions of universals nor particulars exhaust the conception of the individual. A conception of the categories of being that had only universals and particulars in it would apparently be one that would have to see individuals as bundles of qualities. This, thinks Hegel, would be a mistake: “But individuality is not only the return of conception as such [*Begriff*] into itself, but immediately its loss. Through individuality, where the conception is *internal to itself*, it becomes *external to itself* and enters into actuality.”¹³ The proper

conception of the individual is lost in the logical tradition because it can conceive only of concepts' being subsumed under each other. The picture of Porphyry's tree — where one ascends to increasing ladders of generality by excluding specific differences—completely misses the nature of the individual.¹⁴

The individual, one of the major themes of Hegel's *Logic* as a whole, can be conceived in his view in three types of ways: (1) The individual, as radically individual, in its character as a existent entity, a *Daseiende* (the term used in the "Doctrine of Being"), an individual that can be referred to only by the demonstrative "this"¹⁵ (this fails to be a coherent view, since it ultimately makes the individual into an indeterminate "one"). (2) The individual as a thing supporting a variety of properties, a thing that can be pointed out only by a set of individuating descriptions, by phrases of the type "this x that is Φ ." This is the individual as conceived in the terms of the "Doctrine of Essence."¹⁶ This conception of the individual is also faulty. (On this view, since the individual is not identical with the set of descriptions, it becomes conceived in one of two ways: either as a bare particular, something that supports properties, lacks properties itself, but is nonetheless particular; or it becomes conceived as an "I know not what" that is beyond our capacities to describe it but still underlies the phenomenal world of appearance, a conception that develops into the "thing in itself," the individual as realism conceives it). (3) The individual conceived as a this-such, a conception of it that is prior to any propositional description of the individual but that is not independent of the possibility of such descriptions (this is the conception of individuality as expressed in the "Doctrine of the Concept").¹⁷

Hegel takes the idea of the reflexively self-referring self, of an "I" to be a prime example for understanding the kind of thing of which he is speaking in his conception of the self-subsuming, self-positing concept. (He even says that "the I is the pure conception itself which, as conception, has come into *existence*."¹⁸) The self is such an example of conceptual unity, Hegel thinks, for three reasons: (1) the self is a unity of universality and individuality: each individual shares the common characteristic (determinateness) of being an "I," a self—the "I" is thus a universal;¹⁹ (2) each individual is a self, an "I," however, only to the extent that she can refer to herself with the indexical expression, "I" (an indexical expression being one whose reference depends on the context of the use of the expression, such as "this," "here," "now") and thus the self, the "I" is an individual;²⁰ (3) the

self is a self-positing entity: the "I" is constituted in an act that unifies the other acts and ideas as coming from and belonging to the "I" itself. The "I" that unifies consciousness is therefore not a substratum that *has* thoughts—it *thinks*.²¹ This "I" should therefore not be characterized as a substance of any sort but should be given a functional characterization, that is, in terms of what it does. The "I" is the kind of entity that thinks conceptually, and the "Doctrine of the Concept" is Hegel's explanation for how such conceptuality is possible.

This conception of the "I" is also linked with another theme in Hegel's thought, the claim that it is a mistake to look for some intermediary between the subject and the world. If one thinks of concepts as mental representations (*Vorstellungen*), then one will hypostatize them and interpose them between the subject and the world. This is the root of the classical empiricist doctrine of there being an intermediary of "ideas" between us and reality, a doctrine that leads to realism. However, if one thinks of the "I" not as a substance but as a kind of activity, then the need for an intermediary vanishes. The intentionality of concepts, that is, should not be characterized in the empiricist fashion of looking for some relation (be it a causal one or one of resemblance) between "ideas" and reality.²²

Hegel also thinks that this doctrine of individuals commits him to the idea that the copula in a judgment is the expression of an identity between the subject and the predicate. In part, the notion of different kinds of identity is introduced to explain the possibility of the ontological distinction of individuals and concepts and the logical distinction of class membership and class inclusion. For example, in the "judgment of existence" (*Urteil des Daseins*) Hegel says that the subject and predicate are externally related, and the judgment has the form, "the individual is the universal." He calls this the "judgment of inherence" and thinks that what is expressed is an identity seen from two different aspects.

This conception of the identity of subject and predicate is not essential to his doctrine, although it does give rise to some of the more obscure pronouncements in his text. His reason for making such a claim involves no doubt his acceptance of part of the logical tradition, which failed to distinguish concepts being included in other concepts from individuals being subsumed under concepts and thus was led to hold the view that the copula (at least in "essential predication") was an expression of identity.²³ Hegel took this view seriously and tried to understand how it could be made into a coherent view of predication.

II

CONCEPTS, JUDGMENTS, AND INFERENCES

Hegel's concern was not with actually providing a system of formal logic as a logician would do it. It was rather with providing a speculative explanation of how logic could be possible (or, if one likes, he was not concerned with actually constructing logical proofs as he was with how such logical proofs are possible). He makes it clear that he has no quarrel with formal logic per se and that he is not trying to replace formal logic with something else, such as "dialectical" logic.²⁴

What bothered Hegel about the logic of his time was not so much its formality (although there are passages that can be read as suggesting that this might also be one of his basic criticisms of formal logic), but rather what he perceived to be its lack of rigor. To Hegel it seemed that all that logicians up to his time had to offer was a kind of inductive typology of concepts, judgments, and syllogisms without being able to give any rigorous and systematic derivation of them.²⁵ Hegel's knowledge of the logical tradition's attempts to do this must have scanty, but this does not undermine the point that he was making, which is that one goal of logical theory should be precisely to supply that kind of derivation (or to understand why such a derivation is unnecessary or impossible). Hegel is obviously lured by the thought that if he could link his general theory of categories with traditional formal logic, he would be able to supply the missing derivation that had escaped the logicians. He would also be able to show that logic is not an autonomous discipline to itself but must take some of its basic proofs from outside of logic. Such a lure was just too tantalizing for him to pass up. His proposal became, thus, that the missing systematization of formal logic could be done by systematically re-describing formal logic in the terms of his own theory of categories.

Hegel accepts what in his day were the standard divisions of the study of logic, viz., the logic of terms, the logic of propositions, and the logic of syllogisms. This was the standard way in which logic textbooks were organized in his day. It is also, incidentally, the way in which Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*—with the exception of the "Transcendental Aesthetic"—is organized, a fact that no doubt must have impressed Hegel quite a bit. Thus, following the logical practice of his day, he first treats concepts (terms), then judgments, then syllogisms. Hegel's strenuous efforts to show that there are three types of concepts is best understood in the context of his attempt to provide the missing derivation of these things in standard logic text-

books;²⁶ it is also doubtlessly influenced by Kant's suggestions in the "Transcendental Deduction" of the 1787 ("B") edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that the types of concepts may be deduced from the single principle of the synthetic unity of apperception.²⁷

What would a derivation of the two types of concepts — universal and particular concepts—along with a derivation of the idea of the individual look like on Hegelian terms? One would think that Hegel would want to show that the logical tradition's inability to distinguish concepts falling under each other from individuals falling under concepts resulted in contradictory or incoherent utterances. However, this kind of derivation of the basic types of concepts is missing in Hegel's texts (this is not to deny that there are many passages in which Hegel asserts that the derivation has occurred—the text is littered with references to the way in which the universal posits the particular and the individual—it is only to say that no actual derivation is shown). He takes his dissatisfaction with traditional predication theory to be a ground not for redoing traditional predication theory (that had to wait until Frege) but rather as a ground for attempting to provide a kind of dialectical rationale of the basic categories and principles of organization of traditional logic. In particular, he displays a kind of deftness in locating just where the tradition was incoherent combined with a lack of realization that perhaps a full scale reworking of the tradition was in order.

Hegel's break with the logical tradition and his unclarity about what this break entails emerges in his treatment of the judgment. He makes a play on the German word for judgment, *Urteil*, taking it to show that the very term implies "the original division [*Teilung*] of what is originally one."²⁸ Hegel uses this idea to illustrate his belief that a judgment is not a relating of separate items or "representations" (a belief held by Kant and others in the tradition). The judgment, that is, is not a combination of two concepts, each concept standing for an object (for example, the subject standing for an individual, the predicate standing for a universal, and the judgment being the synthesis or combination of the two). Hegel holds that it is legitimate to speak of combination — *Verbindung*, the same term that Kant uses—only with regard to a sentence (*Satz*), not with regard to a judgment.

A judgment seems to be for Hegel not merely a sentence but an asserted sentence, a sentence with a truth claim attached to it.²⁹ A sentence combines independent words, and it is a natural mistake, so Hegel thinks, to believe that a judgment should be therefore also conceived as a combination of two different things. On this mistaken

view, a judgment would combine not words (the sentence does that) but the subject and predicate in a way analogous to the way a sentence combines words. However, the logical distinction of subject and predicate (as opposed to the merely grammatical distinction of the two) cannot be made outside of an understanding of how subject and predicate function in the unity of the judgment (this might be seen as a fledgling—but certainly only fledgling—attempt by Hegel to distinguish logical from grammatical form).³⁰ The function of the judgment, in turn, is to contain “the *determinate* concept over against the still *indeterminate* concept,” that is, to use the predicate of the judgment to characterize a something identified by the subject of the judgment, in order to make a truth claim.³¹

Hegel is not, however, clear on just how to take this. He seems to conclude that the various functions of the judgment (such as expressing class membership or class inclusion) are really aspects of the same thing (or the same function regarded in two ways). This is connected with Hegel’s belief that the copula in a judgment expresses identity, a doctrine that is not consistent with a clear distinction between class membership and class inclusion.³² Of course, this interpretation of the nature of the judgment provides him, so he thinks, with exactly what he needs to show that there is a natural dialectic of judgments: he thinks that it shows that certain judgments are inherently contradictory unless combined into larger inferential (syllogistic) patterns. If one of the functions of the copula is to express identity, and it is clear that certain types of judgments do not clearly express an identity between the subject and the predicate, then those types of judgment will contain a kind of inherent contradiction in their logical form.

This is one of the ways Hegel is only tracing out, however unconsciously, the inherent difficulties of the classical doctrines of predication that he would have picked up by studying the standard logic textbooks of his day. Instead of making the full leap to seeing that perhaps a different theory of predication was needed in order to overcome the problems (nobody really did until Frege), he assumes that the classical theories of predication are inherent in a doctrine of formal logic, and he is only too delighted to show the difficulties in which such theories inevitably land themselves. He sees those difficulties as support for his kind of dialectical categorial program. Unfortunately, it is very unclear just how Hegel thinks that the types of contradiction that he found are to be overcome by being integrated into syllogistic form.

Hegel derives a typology of judgments by relating the form of judgments to the rest of his system. Thus, there are judgments of quality, quantity, of essence, and so on. He does the same thing with syllogisms. This constitutes, so Hegel thinks, the necessary systematization of formal logic that he found missing in logic textbooks. One can explain why there are such and such types of judgments and syllogisms by reference to the basic kinds of categories there are.

We need not go into the details of his typology here.³³ Hegel's actual treatment of the syllogism seems to follow closely Kant's treatment of it in Kant's lectures on logic. Hegel's own treatment can easily be read as a systematic redescription of Kant's typology of syllogisms (Hegel thought, no doubt, that much of the traditional ordering of syllogisms was correct but that only he understood how this was possible). Hegel's treatment of syllogistic inferences ends up being not a formal analysis of their validity but an idiosyncratic evaluation of their speculative worth. It is to Hegel's credit, though, that he saw the difficulties. It should also dispel any lingering beliefs that Hegelianism is inherently incompatible with a more sound understanding of formal logic. Indeed, Hegel's doctrine of the being of individuals is perhaps the first and essential step to a better understanding of formal logic. At least Frege might have agreed.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Conceptual Map of the World

I

OBJECTIVITY

Under the title of “Objectivity” Hegel offers a theory of the basic conceptions of the various systems of entities in the world.¹ What is particularly striking about his account of such conceptions is his belief that they are not empirically derived but are instead derived from systemic considerations having to do with the nature of the kinds of totality structures that he discusses in the “Doctrine of the Concept.”

Part of his motivation for this comes from Kant’s doctrine of transcendental illusion. Kant claimed that reason always errs when it moves from the system of the self-enclosed totality of thoughts to the claim the world itself must be such a self-enclosed system. Since such totalities in principle fall outside the realm of possible experience, we cannot legitimately assert that they exist. We can, however, legitimately use the ideas of such totalities as organizing principles for treating the world *as* a self-enclosed system. They may be legitimately used, in Kant’s words, as regulative ideas.

Being anti-Kantian in these matters, Hegel wonders how it would be possible to think coherently about such totality concepts in a way that did not see them as merely regulative—without, that is, their having to be hooked up to possible experience in order to be meaningful. It is not implausible to assume that Hegel had in mind the very specific counterexample of what in his day was called rational

mechanics. He was fascinated by the fact that the discipline of rational mechanics included pure *a priori* mathematical descriptions of the universe as a whole and did not seem to suffer thereby from lack of intelligibility. Here his model was apparently Lagrange's *Mecanique Analytique*.² That this was his source is all the more plausible when we remember that in his philosophy of mathematics, Hegel drew heavily on Lagrange's conception of the mathematical infinite. The practitioners and proponents of rational mechanics even held empirical matters like experimentation in contempt. How is it possible, Hegel wondered, that one can, as the theoreticians of rational mechanics had done, give a nonempirical description of, for instance, universal gravitation that was also so empirically successful?

Hegel's answer is that it would be possible to give a nonempirical description of such systems if it were the case that in them, the unity of the system organizes the determinateness of the members of that system (or rather, organizes their determinateness as members of the system, allowing for contingent determinateness outside of the system). In such systems the individual entities of a system are organized in the way in which they are because of the demands that the system imposes on them. If he can show that such systems are possible, Hegel thinks, he will have effectively answered the Kantian skepticism about such systems.

In order to understand what Hegel is up to here, it is necessary to raise a question about how this fits into his overall scheme. Why not treat such systems in the "Doctrine of Essence" as a species of systems involving mutual causality? One reason seems to be that the conceptions handled in the "Doctrine of Essence" are worldly, *De Re* conceptions, whereas the conceptions of systems organizing the plurality of their members is a conception of the ideal *mapping* of the world. Another reason is Hegel's basic belief that our conceptions of such systems are not those of substructure/superstructure relationships. They are totalities, wholes organizing themselves into moments.³ It is these totalities that are capable of such detailed *a priori* representation.

In the "Transcendental Dialectic" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant held "Ideas" (a term used by both Kant and Hegel in a specialized sense) to be concepts of reason. Such concepts are not best expressed in the framework of isolated judgments and their verification (that is the task of "the understanding" for both Kant and Hegel) but in syllogistic inference. Since these concepts of systems are "Ideas,"

Hegel takes it as his leading idea that they can be reconstructed out of the basic kinds of syllogisms that we set up to represent these systems. (We should remember that Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* fit into the general pattern of a traditional textbook in logic, and that this fact no doubt influenced Hegel in his treatment of similar matters.)

Hegel treats mechanical systems as causally interrelated systems in both the "Doctrine of Essence" and the "Doctrine of the Concept." In the latter he tries to do the reconstruction in terms of a type of syllogism. He also tries to construe the relation between the system and its members in terms of his overall scheme of classification in the earlier part of the "Doctrine of the Concept": the system is the universal, the entities within the system are the individuals, and the interactions between them are the particulars. The crucial difference between the two treatments seems to lie in the conception of law that is found in both treatments. In the "Doctrine of Essence" laws are conceived simply as phenomenalist correlations of items of appearance. In the version of the "Doctrine of the Concept," however, a law is the *Ordnung*, the ordering of the objects in the system, the way the system produces its own unity or equilibrium.⁴ In the latter conception laws express an "ought" of sorts in that they specify an ideal state of a system (where, in what state, a developing system would end up if nothing were to intervene).⁵ Since they express the system as taken up in thought, as given a conceptual mapping, they are representative of the ideality of the system. Laws are ideal representations of the behavior of objects in a mechanical system.

Hegel's conceptions of law as a component of conceptual mappings of systems is thus subtly different from the conception he elaborated in the "Doctrine of Essence." The systems-conception gives them a counterfactual character, as opposed to the more correlationist, phenomenalist interpretation given them in the "Doctrine of Essence." The causal laws of a mechanical system as expressing the order of the system may be represented as mathematical functions, as idealities. Thus, rather than expressing a uniformity of behavior of items of appearance (as they are taken to be in the "Doctrine of Essence"), they express a kind of necessary relationship that may be formulated in the mathematics of rational mechanics. In expressing only correlations, the laws of appearance cannot explain *why* these correlations hold. It is the ideally represented system that explains the correlations of items found at the phenomenal level. By expressing only uniformities of behavior, the laws of appearance give us only rules, as Hegel puts it, not laws.⁶

II

TELEOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS

Hegel's discussion of teleology has two goals, although he does not always keep them distinct: (1) to provide an analysis of teleological systems so that they may be seen not to be opposed to mechanistic systems; and (2) to show how a teleological system might be possible and how it would fit into the rest of our categorial scheme. In regard to the first task, he chides (as usual) Kant for holding that the two are incompatible or are compatible without being part of a unified system. He takes Kant's later explicit treatment of teleological explanation in the *Critique of Judgment* to be a continuation of Kant's earlier antinomy of freedom and necessity found in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Teleological and mechanistic systems are made to seem compatible in Kant's system only by having the respective concepts of teleology and mechanism apply to different realms, viz., determinism (mechanism) applying to appearance and freedom (teleology) applying to the noumenal realm. Hegel rejects the Kantian solution because he thinks he can show that it is possible that the two systems are compatible with each other, and that he can show, moreover, not only that teleology and mechanism are compatible notions but also that when conceived as compatible with mechanism, teleology presupposes mechanism.

He makes this latter task hard for himself. The justification of teleological concepts is not to be gleaned from their possible application.⁷ That was the method of earlier metaphysics, which had "treated these concepts as it has treated others; it has for one thing presupposed a certain conception of the world and laboured to show that one or the other concept fitted it, while the opposite one was defective because it failed to *explain* that conception."⁸ Such attempts—to show that the world either is to be explained solely teleologically or solely mechanistically—are circular since they presuppose the conception of the world to which they are said to apply or not to apply. The other attempt—to show that teleological explanation simply applies to a different realm of appearance — is bound to degrade the status of teleological explanation. It lowers it into a form of explanation to be used only where mechanistic explanations have failed or have yet to be produced (such as appeals to vitalism in biology, something to which Hegel was also attracted).

How then is the justification of the concept of teleology to be given? Hegel's proposal is that teleological syllogisms be investigated.

If they can be shown to be sound, then the justification of teleological concepts will have been achieved. The concepts of mechanism will have been shown to be deficient: what one *claims*—given the soundness of teleological syllogisms—will contradict what one *can* say if one remains at the level of mechanistic discourse.

Hegel's treatment of the concept of teleology makes the idea of teleological explanation more basic than that of teleological concepts per se, since a teleological explanation is just the reverse of a teleological syllogism. An example of a teleological syllogism would be the following. One begins with a statement of purpose (for example, "Sherman intends to bring about Φ "), then moves to a statement of the means (e.g., "Sherman believes that he cannot bring about Φ without doing X"), and concludes with the action ("Therefore, Sherman does X"). A teleological explanation, on the other hand, begins with Sherman's doing X and explains it by statements of the intention and the means; it is the reverse of the teleological syllogism. Teleological concepts therefore are justified by their playing essential roles in sound teleological explanations and syllogisms (there are also some systemic considerations for his treatment's taking the form it does, but these are best ignored).⁹

Hegel sees the issue not as the narrower one of explaining human action by reference to teleological concepts (although he frames the problem initially in such a form) but as the larger one of teleological systems. The relevant syllogism has its first premise specifying the end (*Zweck*, "purpose") in question, the second premise specifying the means, and the conclusion being the realization of that end. Not only must the conclusion, so Hegel thinks, formally follow from the premises, it must also follow in a substantive sense. That is, the substantive concept of the specific end must substantively imply the specific means to realize it, and in the complete case, must also substantively imply its realization. A conception substantively follows from another conception when the first conception is true only if the second conception is true. Hegel apparently accepts the dictum "he who wills the ends wills the means" and generalizes it to something like "if an end for some kind of activity can be shown to be necessary, then is also necessary that this particular means for achieving that end be used."

He begins with the idea of a subjective end (the term is Kant's) as opposed to an objective end. This can be taken as an *imputed* end or purpose in distinction from one that is truly immanent. An immanent end is one that is in the thing potentially; the immanent end

of people, for instance, is for Hegel their freedom. An imputed end is one that we ascribe to the thing without its necessarily being immanent, as when we say that the purpose of the orange tree is to produce fruit to supply us with vitamin C. In this syllogism, the terms are only externally related; no term substantively implies the other. The end on its own implies neither its means nor its realization. Thus, one might explain the apparently independent evolution of the eye in different species by reference to the end that it serves (for example, efficient mobility in the environment). But that end neither implies that only the eye could have evolved nor that it had to evolve.

Explanations based on such imputed ends can be at best "quasi-teleological" explanations.¹⁰ Hegel says such explanations have only the "form of teleology."¹¹ He notes that this type of end (in our example, efficient mobility in the environment) gives a determinateness to its means (the eye) only by presupposing a mechanistic world. Only if certain law-like causal connections obtain can this type of end lead to such and such type of means. The moments of such a syllogism (ends, means, and realization) have the form of indifference (*Gleichgültigkeit*) to each other.¹²

A true teleological syllogism and explanation would be one in which the mechanical system is indeed implied by the end. If the evolution of the eye could be truly teleologically explained, then it would have to be shown that the end of efficient mobility *implied* both the development of the eye and its realization as a means of efficient mobility. Quasi-teleological inferences based on imputed ends cannot do this, and hence fall short of being true teleological inferences. An adequate understanding of true teleological explanations cannot degrade them into quasi-teleological ones.

Hegel constructs a true teleological inference as moving in four steps: (1) The concept (the end) determines itself as a mechanical system (as external indifference, in Hegel's words). (2) The end is shown to substantively imply the means. In Hegel's terms, the logical distinctness of the end and the mechanical system (the object, in Hegel's terminology) is integrated, *aufgehoben*.¹³ (3) The end thus has this particular type of mechanical system as a material implication. In Hegel's terms, the externality of the system is *aufgehoben*, integrated into the determinateness of the end. (4) The integration of ends and means is thus also the integration of means and realization. Hegel's view is thus an extremely strong one: in a true teleological syllogism, the ends substantively imply both the means and the realization;¹⁴ *this* type of end implies *this* type of means and *this* type of realization.

If efficient mobility in the environment were a true end of evolution, then it would logically imply both the eye and that the eye evolved.

There are a number of deficiencies in Hegel's treatment. As a category, Hegel's concept of true teleology is empirically vacuous. On his view the specific nature of the process of a system is implied by some goal. Presumably, if one knew the goal, then one could logically deduce both the outcome of the process and the specific form that the process would take (the kind of inference in question is, after all, in the form of a syllogism, according to Hegel). This hidden directing of a process by a goal is called by Hegel the "cunning of reason" (*List der Vernunft*).¹⁵ What appears as a random process in actuality serves some rational goal. But how could one know what the goal was? Either one must extrapolate it from observation of current processes, or it must be revealed to one—most likely through some kind of religious vision.

It is certainly questionable if Hegel held the latter view. The former view is of no empirical help, for any extrapolation would simply be equivalent to discerning certain trends in the present system in order to predict the kind of state in which the present system will end up (for example, "if such and such conditions continue to hold, the volcano will erupt and cover the town in ashes"). That, however, is well within the bounds of a nonteleological understanding of the world. Saying that the system in question is incidentally teleological makes no empirical difference to one's description.

Hegel might object to this by arguing that the empirical vacuousness of the concept of teleology is no objection to his speculative treatment of it. We may not *know* the goal that is being realized (this would be a feature of us as finite knowers), but it could still be true that *a* goal was being realized. All that he has done is show how such a teleologically directed process was possible. This, however, would go against the whole nonrealist thrust of the *Science of Logic*, for it rests on the realist presupposition that a statement might be true or false without our having any means in principle of verifying it. Hegel might retort that we do have some means of verifying it on the speculative level, viz., that teleological explanations have been shown to resolve certain paradoxes that one finds in mechanistic explanations. Unfortunately, no effective paradox has been shown. Hegel has shown at best that a complete teleological explanation is logically different from a mechanistic one, not that we fail to move on to teleological explanations only on pain of self-contradiction or incoherence. On his own terms, his attempt fails.

The retort might be made that Hegel is only offering a kind of categorical diagnosis of something he holds by religious conviction, that he is only attempting to explain the possibility of a teleological system (taken from elsewhere, such as the Christian cosmology) within the terms of his own system. Perhaps to some extent this is true, but even taken as such a diagnosis, his attempt fails. Hegel confuses, so it seems, teleological systems with systems that are *purpose-like*. A teleological system is purposive; it is one in which such and such occurs *because* the system is aiming at some goal. A purpose-like system is one in which items function to maintain the system or some performance of the system; given that a system typically does Φ , then X and Y are needed for the performance of that system. Such systems, however, are mechanistic in Hegel's sense; the specification of functions depends on the existence of causal regularities. To the extent that Hegel identifies purpose-like systems with teleological systems, he identifies functional with teleological explanation. Functional explanation, however, need not be teleological.

There is a deeper reason for this failure of diagnosis on Hegel's part. Nowhere in his analysis does the concept of "believing that —" or "noting that —" essentially occur, and without such a concept, the concept of teleology is inapplicable. To say that X occurred because the system was aiming at Φ is to say that X occurred because it was causally necessary or sufficient for Φ *and* that the system *noted* this, and this noting led to its doing X. Otherwise, there is no true teleology going on. If indeed it is true that the system did X that was causally necessary or sufficient for Φ but did not note it or believe that X was causally necessary for Φ , then X cannot be said to have done X *because* of Φ (the end for which it is supposedly aiming).¹⁶ If, for instance, hitting the glass with his arm is causally required for it to break, and Smith hits it with his arm, causing it to break, the breaking of the glass cannot be said to be an *end* of Smith's action unless both Smith believes that it is causally required *and* aims at breaking the glass. Hegel's model of teleological systems makes no provisions for this. Indeed, Hegel's idea of the "cunning of reason" is that things often work out such that certain states are reached that are identical to the states that would be reached were the system to have a rational set of goals and be aiming at them. Hegel apparently thinks that this shows that the system is teleological, but it does not.

Hegel's points are: (1) teleology is best understood by reconstructing teleological inferences and explanations; (2) such inferences

must be shown to resolve paradoxes found on the level of mechanistic discourse; (3) teleology must be shown to be compatible with mechanism. In deference to Hegel, we could maintain that this could plausibly be done if one were to regard the explanation of action as the proper subject matter for such explanations instead of the processes of the world at large. The paradox that would provide the impetus for the move would then be the illustration that mechanistic discourse does not allow one to speak consistently about intentional action taken in its phenomenological sense. This would bring in the concepts of intention and belief crucial to any satisfactory analysis of teleology. But this is not what Hegel does in the *Science of Logic*, leaving the analysis of action for later parts of his system.

Hegel could include a teleological explanation of action in his system. Teleological explanations, for Hegel, presuppose the truth of mechanism. This is true for some teleological syllogisms. A teleological explanation says that Sherman did X *in order to* Φ . This is a complete explanation only if Sherman also *aims at* doing Φ and does X *in order to* Φ , that is, Sherman both notes that X is required for Φ and has Φ for his goal. This would mean that Sherman notes or believes that X is causally required for production of state Φ . Without reliance on some set of causal generalizations, in many instances Sherman would not be able to act intentionally, since Sherman could then have no idea what he would have to do in order to bring about Φ . Teleology presupposes mechanism in this way.¹⁷

The difference between mechanistic and teleological discourse would then lie in the respective conceptual unities (or *Sachen*) present in each. Each is a systems concept, that is, a concept of how a system organizes its unity. Not all systems are mechanistic ones (for instance, an informational system is not), so there is nothing per se wrong with the idea of nonmechanistic systems. The difference between a teleological and a mechanistic system would be that in the former but not in the latter the unity of the system is brought about as a result of goal seeking. With persons, this goal seeking is bound up with the person's ability to act on rational principles. Such an ability involves acting on the basis of systems of inferences. To the extent, then, that systems of inferences are not equivalent to mechanistic systems, the two systems would be distinct. Teleology presupposes mechanism, but mechanism does not presuppose teleology. This goes against what Hegel actually says, but it perhaps remains within some of the spirit of his program.

III

THE MATHEMATICAL AND GEOMETRICAL
DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD

Hegel claims that this conception of "Objectivity" must yield to the superior explanatory capacity of the categories of what he calls the "Idea" (rendering his use of *Idee* as the capitalized "Idea"). This is a passage from conceptions of the possible conceptual mappings of the world to the more sweeping idea of the world as a rationally ordered system. Why does Hegel hold this?

The Idea may be taken as that structure of the real that is the object of purely *a priori* study, viz., its mathematical structure. The study of the Idea is not a delineation of the various types of conceptual mappings of possible systems in the world, as was the case in the section on "Objectivity," but a study of the general properties of those conceptual systems that permit such *a priori* mappings. The world is seen as ordered rationally either in theories (that attempt to depict the world as it is) or in practices (that attempt to restructure the world according to rational norms). Hegel argues that we must conceive of the world as rationally ordered if it is to have the kinds of mappings that he presented as forms of "Objectivity." How is it possible, he asks, that such mappings can be?

The whole section has a two-staged systemic structure: (1) life: a stage of immediate teleology—the view of an organism as noncognitively although purposively dealing with its environment; (2) cognition (*Erkennen*): a cognitive awareness and theoretical description of the world; and a cognitively aware practical transformation of it. Hegel also has some ideas about the Idea being "more true" that need not concern us here.¹⁸

His treatment of cognition is Hegel's redescription of Kant's ideas about the possibility of scientific knowledge.¹⁹ As elsewhere, Hegel's fascination with rational mechanics provides the backdrop against which he stages his arguments. Hegel's *bête noire*, realism, also once again makes an appearance. His treatment of cognition is meant to show that in ordinary scientific dealing with the world, a realist conception is more or less built into the enterprise itself. From the standpoint of cognition the world is taken to be independent of the subject but nonetheless capable of *a priori* treatment.²⁰

Geometry is a paradigm case of such *a priori* treatment of the external world.²¹ The objective world is the external world as cogni-

tively depicted and differentiated. Despite the realist prejudice built into cognition, it is still an ill-founded conception of the relation of knowledge and the world. Hegel relies on the conception of measurement elaborated at the end of the "Doctrine of Being." Although in cognition we assume we are depicting a world independent of our concerns and purposes, in reality we are measuring the world against the *a priori* standards that we set for it. Empirical triangles are measured against their pure counterparts; lens grinders try to approximate, for example, perfectly concave surfaces.²²

The debt to Kant is also clear. In some parts, he just seems to repeat the distinctions made in Kant's lectures on logic (much as he seemed to be doing in his treatment of the syllogism), giving Kant's treatment a better rationale than he thought Kant himself did. Following Kant, Hegel divides cognition into two types: analytic and synthetic. Hegel seems to combine Kant's definitions given in the lectures on logic with those Kant gives the *Critique of Pure Reason* (where the more well-known definition of an analytic judgment—one in which the predicate is contained in the subject—is given).²³

However, on Hegel's view, arithmetic turns out to be not synthetic but analytic.²⁴ Analytic knowledge involves only rule-guided operations and their application. Proof in analysis is only the performance of an operation.²⁵ The claim " $5 + 7 = 12$ " is analytic because, given the rules for constructing and adding integers, it automatically follows that $5 + 7 = 12$. Of course, we discover analytic truths, but this means only that we cannot usually foresee what the outcome of following an operation will be until we have actually performed the operation. In the addition of 5 to 7 to obtain 12, "there is not the slightest trace of a transition to an *other*; it is a mere continuation, that is, *repetition*, of the same operation that produced 5 and 7."²⁶ The addition of new rules may be synthetic in the sense that no repetition of the old ones will lead to new ones. Once they are accepted, however, the operations performed on the basis of them become analytic. Arithmetic as a whole may be synthetic in that it does not follow from any more fundamental operation, but individual arithmetical propositions are themselves analytic.

Synthetic cognition is another matter. It involves the construction of concepts; one does not simply follow operations but constructs the principles as one goes along.²⁷ For Hegel, geometry is the paradigm of synthetic cognition. Although definition and division (for example, of things into species and genera) are on Hegel's view synthetic, they

are also arbitrary. They cannot rise to level of geometry, for there is no principle that necessitates the movement from one to the other, and hence there is no logic to them.²⁸

The crucial element in Hegel's distinction between analytic and synthetic cognition seems to be the idea of defensibility. An analytic statement (" $5 + 7 = 12$ ") is defended by reference to some basic set of operations; a synthetic proposition, on the other hand, is defended by appeal to some ideal norm that is constructed (such as an ideal circle). The kind of defensibility present is derivative from the ways in which the objects of these respective cognitions are constituted. Arithmetical concepts are thus constituted by formal operations, whereas geometrical concepts are constituted by synthetic constructions.

Hegel's actual remarks on geometry are unfortunately very cryptic and not his most lucid. M. J. Petry seems to think that in Hegel's philosophy of nature (a part of his *Encyclopedia*) there is some evidence to show that Hegel was aware of the possibility of nonEuclidean geometry; in the *Science of Logic*, however, he explicitly restricts himself to Euclidean geometry.²⁹ There is also Hegel's brief but barely explicated remark that the axioms of geometry are theorems taken from logic.³⁰ He claims that if they really were axioms, then they would require no proof, which would make them tautologies, since only tautologies require no proof. Since the purported axioms are not really axioms, they must be theorems, and logic is the likely place from which to derive such theorems. What counts as an axiom is relative to the theory in which it occurs.³¹ Hegel seems to think that the axioms of geometry can ultimately be defended on the basis of the kind of categorial system that he has produced. He might of course also be alluding to the relativity of Euclidean axioms vis à vis analytical geometry. In the *Encyclopedia*, for example, he notes that analysis may produce analytical definitions of what is the result of geometrical construction (for example, a parabola may be defined as $ax^2 + bx + c = y$).³²

In passing, we should at least note the interesting shot that Hegel takes at the experimentalist empiricism of his day. He expresses skepticism about the truth of the leading principle of experimentalist empiricism—that what cannot be found in experiential testing is to be discarded—claiming that in fact in the practice of experiments, there is a "deception practised here by cognition, which has taken up empirical data one-sidedly, and only by doing so has been able to obtain

its simple definitions and principles; and it obviates any empirical refutation by taking up and accepting as valid the data of experience, not in their concrete totality but in a particular instance, and that, too, in the direction helpful to its hypotheses and theory."³³ Hegel seems to be expressing the idea, now common among philosophers of science, that there is no theory-independent manner of experimentally testing propositions. It takes a theory to know if the experiment was itself a legitimate one.

His criticism of experimentalist conceptions of science was prompted by his fascination with the *a priori* element in science, itself fueled by his admiration for the rational mechanics of his day. Rational mechanics was the attempt—known to Hegel particularly in the works of Lagrange—to produce a nonexperimental, purely mathematical science of mechanics.³⁴ Mechanics on this view was an *a priori* science, and was to be distinguished from the merely empirical science of physics (a distinction Hegel carries over into his philosophy of nature in his *Encyclopedia*). Lagrange stated in his *Mecanique Analytique* that his goal was to present a method that requires "neither constructions nor geometrical or mechanical arguments, but only algebraic operations, subject to a regular and uniform progress," resulting in the reduction of the theory of mechanics "to general formulae, the simple development of which gives all the equations necessary to the solution to each problem."³⁵

To a large extent, the program of rational mechanics—to give a nonexperimentalist *a priori* description of the world—was successful. Few historians of science would disavow the immense importance of, for example, Euler's or Lagrange's or Bernoulli's work. Many of the results and equations established by them remain in use today, although the acceptance of the theory of relativity has invalidated some parts of their theory. The appearance of a group of thinkers giving an apparently successful *a priori* description of the world of space, time, energy, mass, and force would have obviously appealed to Hegel. Confronted with what he regarded as the fact of the success of rational mechanics, his concern was to explain how rational mechanics would be possible. His conclusion was that it was possible only if the kind of realism that was criticized in the "Doctrine of Essence" was wrong, and something more like his own view of conceptual maps was true. Rational mechanics both served to confirm his theory and to provide additional grist for his speculative program.

IV COGNITION AND PRACTICE

Hegel takes himself to have given a diagnosis of the teleology of cognition: the knowing subject has an impulse to realize itself, which is partially satisfied in the systematic redescription of the world in terms of the *a priori* constructions of mathematics and geometry. This is also Hegel's redescription of the Kantian "Copernican revolution": the subject metaphorically brings things into its own orbit by integrating them (in the sense of *aufheben*) into a comprehensive *a priori* framework. The content of cognition thus *appears* to be taken in from the outside; empirical reality seems to give the filling to these abstract mathematical descriptions. But this is only appearance. Hegel does not deny that theory has an experiential component; rather, he stresses that it also has a large conceptual component to it.³⁶ Notions like force and law are not merely formal descriptions of empirically discovered things but involve the construction of ideal norms against which we measure reality. The defense of the ideal norms cannot come from experience; they are something that the knowing subject brings to experience in order to organize the material of cognition.

In the realm of theory we act as if we are taking the world as the standard of truth, and theoretical propositions are supposed to be measured by how well they correspond to that reality. Hegel thinks that he has shown that this is only a pretense (a well-founded one but a pretense nonetheless), that what is really the case is that we set up norms as to how the world ought to behave and measure the world against those norms. As Hegel sees it, the real concern should not be one of trying to see how well our theoretical norms measure some independently existing world but one concerning the defensibility of these norms on their own. Hegel does not opt for a pragmatist defense of these norms; that would make them contingent. Their defense rests in the philosophical explanation of them as being determinations of some unitary conceptual principle. Cognition on its own cannot supply this definition and should not be expected to do so; only philosophy has as its task the kind of explanation of the possibility of these norms.³⁷ This does not mean that philosophical explanation takes the place of scientific explanation. Philosophical explanation has a different set of concerns that are properly its own.

When Hegel turns to practice, he uses the same strategy. Practice looks as if it were the opposite of theory. In theory, we pretend to describe the world and make it the standard of truth for theoretical

propositions; in practice, we pretend to take the practical proposition as the standard to which the world ought to conform.³⁸ That is, in theory we are supposed to let ourselves be determined by the world, but in practice we are supposed to determine the world.

The truth of the matter, so Hegel argues, is not so clear cut. In theory we impose norms on the world as to how it *ought* to behave, and in practice we derive our norms from some conception of the *actual* world. He thinks that he can show this through an analysis of practical syllogisms.

A practical syllogism might *seem* to have the form: (1) Tom wills that he bring it about that Φ be the case; (2) Tom believes that Φ can be brought about only if he first does X; (3) therefore, Tom does X. The first premise of the syllogism would then be equivalent to something like "Tom wills that 'p' be true" where "p" stands for the proposition, " Φ is the case."³⁹

Hegel disagrees with this as a reconstruction of the form of the practical syllogism. He claims that the practical proposition "Tom ought to *do* some action, X" is to be derived from a nonpractical proposition, "the world ought to *be* such and such," where the latter statement is one of cognition (in Hegel's sense of the word). Hegel reads the second premise as implied by the first premise.⁴⁰ This is not merely because he accepts the dictum "he who wills the end, wills also the means" (as we saw earlier in his treatment of the teleological syllogism) or that "ought" implies "can." It rests, rather, with his much different understanding of the practical syllogism.

The first premise of practical syllogisms in Hegel's understanding must instead state that something is good—not that an individual *wills* anything—and the second premise states something constitutive to achieving that good. The practical syllogism thus runs: (1) Φ is good; (2) X (an action) is constitutive of Φ ; (3) a person notes that she must X in order to Φ ; (4) the person notes that she is the type of person for whom Φ is appropriate; (5) therefore, she is to do X. How the world ought to be depends on some overall theory of the way the world is.

The Idea, as the overall conceptual map of the world, is a statement of how the world is and how things ought to behave, given that this is the way the world is. As applied to practical propositions, this seems to bring to light a not always explicit, somewhat Aristotelian understanding of the good in Hegel's thought (although he does not make any reference to Aristotle in the section of the *Science of Logic* concerned with the practical Idea). One must have a characterization

of the world and the typical functioning of entities in that world in order to say of anything that it is good. What is therefore good, for instance, depends on the way in which entities like people typically lead lives that are rational.

In his *Philosophy of Right* Hegel argues that such a world is possible only as a practically structured one, not as the natural world. It is a world of institutions, not of nature. In such a practically structured world there will be statements of ends (of what is unqualifiedly good in that culture, for example, "It is good that one raise a family"), and statements that will be about the kinds of behavior and institutions that are required, appropriate, or permitted by such ends (for example, "Monogamous marriage is the proper [or required or best or appropriate] means for raising families.") Practical syllogisms thus rely to some extent on an understanding of what is good in certain types of historically determinate situations for types of people fulfilling certain types of roles and functions within that culture. This is a well-known Hegelian thesis; it is not one, however, for which he is arguing in the *Science of Logic*. In the latter he is content to support the more general point about the nature of the good being determined by some conception of the way the world is and the manner in which this allows the practical syllogism to be conceived. In the *Philosophy of Right* he is concerned to show that the world in question is a culturally structured one and to defend that claim. (We shall discuss this point when we later discuss Hegel's ethics.)

Through this kind of reading of the practical syllogism Hegel tries to show how it would be possible to integrate the difference of theory and practice. The opposition of cognition and practice—of the picture of our receiving data from the objective world and forming our practical norms on the basis of subjective preferences—is a wrongly dualistic picture. The objective/subjective dualism (equivalent to the cognition/practice dualism) is at best one of degree, not of kind.⁴¹ The Idea of the world—its general *a priori* conceptual map—is one that is as much constructed as discovered. Hegel thinks that he has successfully avoided charges of relativism by showing that this construction is not arbitrary, not dependent on transient needs or interests nor based purely on pragmatic considerations. Rather, it is based on the development of the categories that he has exhibited in the *Science of Logic*. Since there is a nonpragmatic rationale for introducing each category or set of categories—its being required to explain the possibility of thinking in a noncontradictory fashion of previous cate-

gories—there is also a nonpragmatic rationale for thinking about the world as a rational construction.⁴²

This nonpragmatic rationale is the last category of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, the absolute Idea, which (despite its highly metaphysical sounding title) may be taken to be the meta-logic, as it were, of the theory. Hegel himself says as much: "Therefore what remains to be considered here is not a content as such, but the universal aspect of its form—that is, the *method*."⁴³ But what produces the dialectical move to the absolute Idea is no contradiction that must be avoided (as was supposed to be the case in all earlier transitions) but only the recognition that the underlying rationale for the *Science of Logic* itself ought to be stated.

The absolute Idea is not so much a specific category as it is the whole logic of the concepts of being, essence, and conceptuality. The dialectical "moves" of the concepts are constitutive of the determinateness of the concepts in question, and hence it is natural that at the end of such a theory as the Hegelian one there would be a reflection on the types of moves that make up the theory.⁴⁴ The structure of the *Science of Logic* can be seen in two ways: (1) in a static way: like the collective arrangement of "pieces" in a "game," we can view the collective positions of the concepts vis à vis one another; this way would be represented in a good table of contents; (2) in a dynamic way: the movement from one position to another. The absolute Idea is the *Science of Logic* seen from the dynamic perspective.

The method must have three aspects to it: a regressive aspect, a progressive aspect, and a systemic, architectonical aspect.⁴⁵ From the standpoint of the end of the *Science of Logic*, the method is a regressive, analytic one.⁴⁶ One is simply unpacking the determinateness of the various categories in question. From the standpoint of the beginning of the *Science of Logic*, the method is synthetic; one is constructing and introducing new categories.⁴⁷

The systemic aspect provides the rationale for ordering the categories. One can distinguish between the large-scale and the small-scale architectonic. The large-scale architectonic concerns the passages from the "Doctrine of Being" to the "Doctrine of Essence" to the "Doctrine of the Concept." It is a kind of ordering according to the model of explanation that each presents. The "Doctrine of Being" presents a kind of logic of individuals, the "Doctrine of Essence" presents a kind of logic of substructure/superstructure relationships, and the "Doctrine of the Concept" presents a logic of conceptuality

itself. Each major stage (being, essence, or concept) tries to be self-explanatory and self-subsuming. The first two stages (being and essence) fail in this. Only the last stage (the concept) provides an account of how self-subsumption and self-explanation would be possible. The small-scale architectonic simply concerns the kinds of moves made within each domain.⁴⁸

It is the large-scale architectonic that is crucial to Hegel's theory. If the transition, for instance, from being to essence could not be made, his program would have failed in a way that it would not if some particular transition in one of the sections (for example, the transition from force to law in the "Doctrine of Essence") were not to be possible.

What is ultimately important is the principle of dialectical thought itself: dialectical thought comprehends itself in comprehending its other. We have seen this to have two parts. First, it is to be self-subsuming: dialectical thought should be an instance of itself. Second, it should also be self-explanatory: it should explain how it itself is possible (it should be self-positing, in Hegel's words). In fact, Hegel argues, only dialectical thought fulfills both conditions. It takes the other categories and posits itself as that which gives them their determinateness: it determines the process of determining all the other categories (by showing them to be resolutions of what would otherwise be contradictions or incoherences) and determines this very process itself (the method is not grafted on to the categories but emerges from the nature of the beginning of the *Science of Logic*). Dialectical thought explains other things (the other categories), is an instance of itself (the statement of the method is given naturally by the method itself), and explains itself (it is possible to reflect on the method since it is the method that emerges as the solution to contradictions). Thus, Hegel caps the *Science of Logic* with more of an acknowledgment of dialectical thought as the speculative principle than a derivation of it. Dialectical thought explains the possibility of giving a nonarbitrary rationale for the belief in the rational construction of the world.

This last move gives Hegel a new concern. If the world may be seen as a rational construction, then the question becomes: a construction by whom or what? It is this question that propels Hegel from his categorial program of the *Science of Logic* to the metaphysics of absolute spirit. He thinks that he can show how the construction is possible by the postulation of an entity—spirit, *Geist*—that does the construction. It also partially explains why he thought it necessary

to have a philosophy of history; being aware of the different constructions, both cognitive and practical, that have been given at various times in history, Hegel thought that it was necessary to show how spirit had been rationally developing itself throughout history, and that the different constructions were not just different but represented stages on the way to a full construction. We shall later see that there is also another rationale to Hegel's philosophy of history.

This move into the metaphysics of absolute spirit is not, however, an implication of his system nor even a necessary part of it. It is an extension of his categorial system into a type of noncategorial metaphysics; it goes from asking how we justify the introduction of a new category (the method of dialectic in the *Science of Logic* and the overall philosophy of nature and political philosophy that follows it) to the introduction of an *entity* (spirit) that is supposed to explain how the categorial program is itself possible. Whatever the merits of that proposal, it is not the same kind of task as the categorial program.

CHAPTER SIX

The Role of Mind

Hegel's philosophy of mind is in one sense only a continuation of some of the basic ideas of the more general *Science of Logic* in a more concrete form. It is presented by and large as part of Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, covering §§377–482. However, it also has an independent life of its own, raising themes and ideas that could not be raised in the *Science of Logic*. Like the *Science of Logic*, the philosophy of mind uses the dialectical method. It attempts to show that certain kinds of descriptions result in contradictions or incoherences unless they are integrated into a larger framework of discourse. Hegel's antifoundationalism comes to the fore in these texts. He rejects the attempt to locate some privileged area of experience — such as, for example, the immediate awareness of the contents of our own minds—and base all our other claims to know about things on the set of minimal and self-evident truths found in this privileged area. Rather, he attempts to show that even our so-called minimal claims to knowledge depend on a much larger, albeit implicit ordered knowledge of the world.

The picture of knowledge that emerges in Hegel's theory is not that of a secure and minimal foundation with everything resting squarely on it but rather that of descriptions being embedded in larger patterns of meaning and other sets of descriptions from which they draw their overall sense. In this context the goal of a philosophy of mind for Hegel is to delineate the moments of the Idea of mind, that is, to show how this conception of mind fits with the other conceptions

of items like thing, substance, and so on that Hegel has already developed. Moreover, it should show how this conception of mind is integrated into our overall view of the world. It is an explanation of how minds are possible in a consistently and coherently understood view of the world.

I

THE HEGELIAN CONCEPTION OF MIND AND EXPLANATORY POSITS

Hegel delineates what he takes to be two intrinsic features of mind: idealization and freedom. This idea of idealization is Hegel's version of Kant's Copernican revolution: idealization is the process of bringing things into mind's "orbit." Mind idealizes things when it brings them into a form that is comprehensible to mind, when it locates them in a context that it finds comprehensible. In Hegel's terms, idealization is the integrating of things into the rational Idea, into the overall conceptual map of the world. To idealize something is in part to bring it to a coherent understanding, to fit it into an intelligible world. Idealization is not a metaphysical reduction of things to the contents of our minds, nor is it a vision of things in terms of some ideal of their perfection (as might be suggested by the English usage of "idealize").

To see things *as* idealized is to see them as *posits*, as explanatory constructs. This follows, first, from Hegel's general program for the *Science of Logic*, that no category be given a privileged status. Second, it follows from Hegel's rejection of foundationalism: if nothing is privileged—neither physical objects nor mental contents—then everything must be seen as a posit that is justified only in terms of how well it does its explanatory job.

How one takes this is crucial for how one takes Hegel's whole program. We might take Hegel to say—as John Findlay has in fact suggested—that we should come to see things "as if" they were posits of mind, all the while knowing full well that they are not, with this conception of idealization being justified as a helpful although fictitious way of organizing experience.¹ Although this is not that far removed from Hegel's thought, it is also not identical with it. Nowhere does Hegel give any hint that idealization is only a helpful way of regarding mind; rather, he sees it as part of the very essence of mind.²

No object (including mind) is to be given per se explanatory priority. If we must regard all objects as posits, then we must also have an explanation of how positing itself is possible. Hegel's argument (based on his earlier line of thought in the *Science of Logic*) is that this ultimately requires the introduction of a conception of mind as that which does the positing. Although mind has no special priority at the beginning, it acquires it in the course of the dialectic. Mind acquires its explanatory priority for two reasons: (1) because it is mind that posits the various constructs of experience³; and, more importantly, (2) mind can also be conceived as self-positing: it posits itself as the entity that does the positing.

In Hegel's teleology of explanation, the best explanation is always that explanation that would also be self-subsuming (it also explains itself). Thus, Hegel's view seems to be something like the following. We should conceive of the various ordinary acts of positing (x , y , and z) without any reference to mind. The possibility of mind enters if we then introduce the conception of a self-reflexive act, Θ , defined as the act that classifies x , y and z and itself, Θ , as acts of positing *by an entity*, mind.⁴ We may say that there are minds when there are entities whose essential feature consists in the act of referring to itself. Such at least seems to be the core of Hegel's idea of mind as posited in the act of positing other things and itself. Mind does not exist prior to such positing (this also fits in with Hegel's functional conception of mind in terms of what it does, not in terms of its being some kind of substance⁵).

If the various conceptions of things are justified as being the best explanations of experience, then the conception of mind as self-positing would be justified if that was the best explanation of how experience, thought, logic, and so forth was possible—and Hegel takes the methodical course of the *Science of Logic* and the philosophy of mind as just that argument for the explanatory priority of mind. Hegel speaks of this being a derivation of the necessity of mind, but once again it is better to see his arguments as more speculative than transcendental. He does not so much show that this is the only possible coherent conception of mind (although that is certainly part of his claim) as he shows that such a view is coherently possible. We should take his claims in his philosophy of mind not as transcendental conditions of the possibility of thinking coherently about mind, but rather as an attempt at framing the best explanation, the best systematic redescription of our experience and thoughts about the world.

Various posits are justified in terms of how well they help to organize and explain experience. This does not make Hegel into a metaphysical idealist (one who holds that physical objects *are* just mental entities or constructs out of sense data). To see everything as a posit is not necessarily to reduce all objects to being some form of mental entity or construct out of mental entities. Seeing everything as a posit is consistent with the assumption of nonmental (external) objects as the best way to make sense of our experience. But is not mind itself then also only a construct, something perhaps to be abandoned if it fails to provide enough explanatory utility? Why should mind and not, say, *people* be the explanatory principle? Why not just say that people construct various posits to explain their experience, and mind is one of those constructs? Thus, in a particular explanatory scheme, mind might be more basic than other objects but might itself be given up if it failed to provide any more explanatory utility.

Why then should self-positing mind be the best explanation? What if we decided that the world was not best explained as a posit by anything, but instead not explained at all, simply accepted as just a brute fact that imposed itself on our minds? Hegel does not directly answer this kind of question, but remarks scattered throughout his works suggest that his answer would be something like this. First, there are constraints on positing. What can be posited is not just a matter of decision. The most general constraints are given in the *Science of Logic*. The Idea, as the general conceptual map of the world, is the systematic representation of those constraints.

Second, such positing cannot occur in a vacuum but only against a background of other more specific presuppositions. The posits done by mind come in "packages," not in individual pieces. What is available is both limited by the conceptual resources of the historical period and is extended by the individuals in that period.⁶ Hegel gives no single argument for this view, apparently taking the whole of his work as a more or less extended argument for it. In the section on "Absolute Freedom and Terror" in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel considers an alternative view of mind as completely free in what it posits and argues that such a view has disastrous ethical consequences, since it can put no limits on what is permitted and not permitted.⁷ Third, there are factual limits on what can be posited; a person cannot escape mortality, for example, by deciding to posit himself as an eternal being (in fact, the inability to do so is grounds for believing that the best explanation for this inability is that such things are not in our control).

These conditions form part of what Hegel calls the "finitude" of mind. If mind were infinite (as he conceives the religious mind to be), then it would be able to set its own limits—it would be completely self-positing.⁸ God is the limiting case of a completely self-positing mind. People, however, are only finite minds that at best can emulate the infinite mind but cannot duplicate it (although, to be honest, it is unclear if this last claim represents an adequate reading of Hegel's text; numerous passages suggest that he seems to think that in participating in art, religion, and philosophy, we are not merely approximating infinite mind but actually are infinite minds when we do so).

Hegel's view of freedom follows from his understanding of the explanatory role that mind plays in his scheme. As self-positing, mind is free. It is self-determining in that it sets its own limits (and the limits to the limits it can set are also the limits to its possible freedom).⁹ For Hegel, the theory of the limits form an essential part of the theory of freedom. If the best explanation of self-positing turns out to be one that requires certain sorts of limits to such positing, then the possibility of freedom rests on there being these kind of limits. Not surprisingly, this is in fact Hegel's view: the self in positing itself requires its "other."¹⁰ Hegel's arguments for this, however, come in his treatment of self-consciousness and the acknowledgment of others, and will be looked at in more detail there.

II

PHILOSOPHICAL PSYCHOLOGY: THE EXPLANATION OF POSITING

Philosophical psychology for Hegel is the explanation of how coherent thought and action are possible. It is the study of mind "as aware of . . . ," in both its representational and practical functions. Philosophical psychology constructs a picture of the kinds of activities that explain the possibility of there being any cognitive awareness at all.¹¹ It must, therefore, presuppose the basic categories of cognition and practice developed in the *Science of Logic* (in the section on the Idea) and concern itself only with what types of mental activity make this cognition and practice possible.

Hegel's actual arguments in this regard are brief and presuppose other arguments given elsewhere in his work. One finds only the

shadow of his meticulous (though not always successful) attempts in the *Science of Logic* to demonstrate a kind of internal contradiction in some level of discourse that can be avoided only by positing and moving on to another level. Instead, he is concerned only with providing a kind of outline of the kinds of explanations that a full-blown philosophical psychology would have if it were executed in the terms of his own theory (something that he apparently intended to provide but died before completing).¹²

Hegel also characterizes his ideas about philosophical psychology as Aristotelian¹³. This is particularly striking, since his actual arguments are for the most part partial reconstructions of Kant's ideas about philosophical psychology in the A-edition version of the "Transcendental Deduction" of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹⁴ Kant there argues that coherent experience of independent objects necessarily requires a three-stage synthesis of experience: first, we must intuit individuals in space and time; second, we must associate them in imagination; third, we must recognize them as falling under general concepts. When all three stages have been completed, we have rendered experience into judgmental form, and we have gone from mere experience to a perception of objects in space and time.

Hegel gives these Kantian ideas a different twist (as one would expect, given his arguments against a hard-and-fast distinction between the theoretical and the practical Idea in the *Science of Logic*). The various stages of building up states of ourselves into representations, into mental contents that are bearers of meaning, can be interpreted as stages of positing and self-positing by mind.¹⁵ Hegel is not concerned with epistemology in his philosophical psychology; such epistemological arguments are provided by him in his *Phenomenology of Spirit* and in the corresponding section of the *Encyclopedia*.¹⁶ Instead, he is concerned with providing an explanation of how cognitive awareness is possible. Again, I take his arguments as speculative, not as demonstrations of the transcendental conditions of experience.

Hegel takes this in a much different direction than Kant. The goal of a philosophical psychology is not just to explain how such and such is possible by appeal to certain faculties of mind. Its primary concern is to explain the different faculties in a unified way. Kant seemed to think that we could not go any deeper into the faculties of mind than just to note the different ones and the function they served; Hegel thinks that we can explain this in terms of a unified principle. Hegel therefore comes to reject the picture of mind as di-

vided up into various faculties, each of which has its own type of mental act (the picture that dominates Kant's philosophical psychology). For Hegel, the various kinds of activities of mind are all forms of *one* type of activity, viz., idealization. The various faculties of mind should not be seen as independent forces but as expressions of one type of basic activity: positing and self-positing. The various Kantian faculties (such as, for instance, productive imagination) can then be redescribed as moments of this more general type of activity.¹⁷

Hegel begins with sensations. On their own, they are not pieces of knowledge so much as they are vehicles of knowledge, and they become such vehicles by being taken up into thought. Only in the transformation of sensation into intuition—in the transformation of a state of oneself into something having a representational content, into being a bearer of meaning—do sensations become vehicles for knowledge. This is possible only if one can distinguish what is a state of oneself from what is not such a state, which is itself possible only if one can distinguish an internal sensation (a modification of oneself) from an object that is external to the sensation.¹⁸

We can explain this by a kind of analogy. Hegel thinks that our ability to distinguish states of ourselves from objects external to those states is possible by our *projecting* through our sensations to objects independent of us. Consider the act of writing with a pen on a smooth piece of paper and then on a rough surface. In both cases, one is not aware of one's "sensations"; one is aware of the different textures on which one is writing. One does not feel the pen; rather, one feels through the pen the surface on which one is writing. The pen becomes an extension of ourselves. Analogously, our sensations are not the objects of our cognition; they are the conduits of our cognition. In our projecting through them, the sensations become not objects of knowledge but *vehicles* of knowledge. We cognize sensations by fitting them into the broader framework of which they are a part, that of a public spatio-temporal world.¹⁹ We do not, on Hegel's reconstruction, first cognize sensations and then extrapolate from them to a world of objects in space and time. Sensations become elements of cognition only as part of an overall awareness of a spatio-temporal world. Sensations on their own are cognitively meaningless. Only by becoming vehicles of meaning as intuitions do they acquire epistemic significance.

Hegel's antifoundationalism makes itself clear. Sensations do not provide a kind of privileged area of certainty on the basis of which we then go on to construct a picture of the world. They are cognitively

significant only as part of a larger framework of awareness and description of a spatio-temporal world. To drive the point home that this does not involve him in a kind of subjective idealism (a view that Hegel often imputes to Kant as well as to Berkeley), he notes that the spatio-temporal form that these objects have is not something that we impute to them but something that they have on their own.²⁰

In order to distinguish sensations as states of ourselves from awareness of independent spatio-temporal objects, we must integrate the objects themselves into an objective spatio-temporal framework. Otherwise, the lone individual could not identify objects; she would have only a meaningless rhapsody of sensations. But to locate things in space and time is not to do much. It may specify to which object among others we are referring, but it tells us nothing about the object.²¹ To locate an object in space and time is only a first step; we must also characterize it by a general concept. The combination of these two features—picking out an object and characterizing it by a general term—together form a judgment. If this kind of recognition, however, is to be objective, it must be done according to public (external to oneself) principles. This is possible, suggests Hegel, only through the means of a public language. Intuitions become representations (*Vorstellungen*) when they are integrated into such a system, and it is in seeing them as representations that we come to understand the cognitively significant areas of mental activity as posits (Hegel refers to this as the move from representation to thought).

III

PHILOSOPHY AND MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Hegel concludes that since the nature of mind is to be self-positing, a philosophical moral psychology is also possible. This would be an explanation of how willing in general and willing the right and the good in particular is possible. As in his treatment of cognition, Hegel does not really display any internal contradictions in the development of various stages of discourse in talking about the will (at least no contradictions that someone not already convinced of the truth of the Hegelian system would find). Rather, he assumes an explanatory goal and judges the adequacy of various explanations as to how well they measure up to that goal. That goal is seeing the will as free when

(1) it is determined by a content that is universal, (2) it itself posits that content, but (3) that content is posited by the will as embodied in an individual person.²² This amounts to judging various explanations in terms of how well they fit the general constraints of the doctrine of the practical Idea that he developed in the *Science of Logic*.²³

Once again, Hegel is trying to combine both Aristotelian and Kantian themes. On the one hand, ethics must include some theory of motivation. The agent as an individual has to have a reason to act ethically. If ethical claims are to have any hold on an individual, it must be because it is rational for that individual to act that way. Ethics must include a theory of why individuals should from their perspective *want* to act ethically, of why it is rational for an individual as an individual (instead of a "rational agent in general") to want to act ethically. The most natural locus for this element of ethical theory is something like Aristotle's account of well-being: in leading the ethical life, the individual also will lead the best, most satisfying life. Conversely, it should not be possible that a person leading a life that goes against the basic ethical claims could also be leading a life that from his point of view is a satisfactory one.

On the other hand, ethics is not simply a matter of individual calculation of personal satisfaction. There must be reasons to act ethically that go beyond individual well-being. This is a feature of rationality itself. Reasons function impartially (what Hegel identifies as the universal); if X is a good reason, then it is a good reason for everyone (or at least everyone in the same kind of circumstance). The most natural locus for this element in ethical theory is Kant's theory of universalization in morality: ethical reasoning must be impartial, be done not from my standpoint but from the standpoint of rational agents in general. Kantian ethics also expresses the fundamental claim that ethics must involve my freely choosing to act ethically. It must be something posited by the will if we are to see the will as an element in self-positing mind.

Hegel's view thus seems to be that although Aristotelian ethics can explain why I might want to act ethically but not why I am obligated to act ethically, Kantian ethics can explain why I am obligated to act ethically but not why I would want to act ethically. Or, to put the matter differently, Aristotelian ethics captures the element of first-person reasoning in ethical thought (why *I* should act in such and such a fashion), whereas Kantian ethics captures the element of third-person reasoning in ethical thought (why *one* should act in such and such a fashion).

The truth of the matter is that the two should coincide, be integrated with each other. The claims of morality on the person should fit with the fundamental projects and goals of the person. If the two do not coincide, then where there is a clash between the person's most deeply believed personal values and those of so called impartial morality, there could be no personal reconciliation between the claims of morality and the claims of personal life. Morality would become something alien to the individual, in conflict with those things that make life for that individual worthwhile. However, the satisfactory life and the moral life should not be at odds with each other. In pursuing the claims of ethics, we should not be sacrificing a worthwhile life. A theory of ethical willing should make room, therefore, for both Kantian and Aristotelian conceptions.

Hegel distinguishes between three conceptions of free willing and finds each of them inadequate as a complete explanation of how free willing in an ethical sense is possible. Each of them captures an element of free willing, but each is on its own inadequate as a complete explanation of its possibility. Or, as Hegel would put it, they are conceptions of implicit (*an sich*) free willing.

In the first sense, I might see myself as free if I act on the basis of some of my emotions. Hegel uses the term, the "practical feelings," such as joy, hope, anguish, gaiety, shame, remorse, and so forth to group the emotions that might serve as a basis for such motivation. The practical feelings have an implicit rationality to them. First, they are much more like thoughts than are sensations, since they may be said to have intentional objects; I may feel remorse over having insulted you, anger over your betrayal, and so on.²⁴ Second, they are subject to rational criticism in a way that sensations are not. If I feel contempt for you because I believe that you ran one of the death camps in the second world war, and then find out that you did not do that at all (I confused you with somebody else), that instead you were a partisan trying to bring them to a halt, it is irrational for me to continue to feel contempt for you. The practical feelings, like beliefs, can be appropriate or inappropriate depending on the evidence for holding them.²⁵

However, no matter how sophisticated one made this doctrine, it would fail as a complete explanation of moral psychology. Hegel holds largely Kantian reasons for objecting to making the feeling of such emotions a sole criterion of morality. It would make morality a much more contingent affair than it really is, since it would depend on certain factors that occur in people for morally arbitrary reasons.

For the practical feelings to have full moral significance, the content of these feelings should be completely posited by the will. But what one will feel remorse over depends on factors that one has not willed (such as upbringing). One person might feel remorse over the injury to another, whereas another might feel only joy.²⁶ Moreover, if I feel no regret at having done Φ , while you do feel regret for having done Φ , it should not follow that I have done nothing wrong, whereas you have. This would be especially wrong if my lack of regret were due to some factor outside of my control, such as upbringing. Another way of putting this is that although such practical feelings are mine, they are not in the requisite sense posited by me; they are to a large extent out of my control. This failure to be posited by me would not give the will a universal content—required in Hegel's view for *moral* motivation—and it therefore fails as an adequate explanation (Hegel assumes, following Kant, that universalization is part of the analysis of morality).²⁷ The moral emotions thus are factors that the will cannot be said to have posited.

Hegel does not deny motivational efficacy to the practical feelings. It is not enough to have merely the right idea; one must also have the right emotions about it for it to have any moral efficacy (Hegel does not go so far as to say that having the right motivation in terms of the practical feelings is a necessary condition of there being moral motivation in general; one might even be motivated to do the right thing although one found it personally disagreeable). He denies only that a reliance on them as explanations of action could be a satisfactory account of moral motivation. Because they fail to give a complete account, we should not infer that they fail to play any role in explanation whatsoever. Hegel does not deny that the "practical feelings" have some role to play in the explanation of moral motivation. Although they remain important as one of the springs of ethical action—without the practical feelings, the individual person would have little motivation to act—it is crucial to make sure that they have the right content, that one does not feel joy over, for example, successful murder, but over something more in tune with ethical life.²⁸

A second type of explanation for moral motivation, building on the idea of practical feelings, would consist in seeing such motivation as resting in certain dispositions of character that motivate one to act in some ways but not in others. Free willing would then consist in following those dispositions that constituted one's character. Hegel misleadingly calls these dispositions "impulses" (*Triebe*), but he makes

it clear that he means by "impulse" an intelligent disposition of character involving reason.²⁹ One can make an effort to acquire or not to acquire (or to lose) these dispositions. Hence, they can be seen to be posited by the will.

These dispositions are connected with our having certain kinds of interests. To have an interest is to want to have certain states of affairs come to be in the world. Because we have interests, therefore, we acquire dispositions to want to produce these states of affairs, to have a hand ourselves in how the world turns out to be.³⁰ We are not, that is, merely interested in outcomes being produced. We want ourselves to be the agents of the production (this is what Hegel calls the moment of subjective individuality—indeed, when a certain outcome is important to our sense of personal identity, we do not merely have a disposition to produce it but have a passion for bringing it about³¹). Moreover, we want to be the agents of the production in a specific way: we want the outcome that our actions produce to be *expressive* of those actions, to embody the *thoughts* contained in our willing these actions (for the will is, according to Hegel, a form of thought³²). Only then could they be said to be free acts, to be ones actually posited by the will. If the outcome were to come to be without our willing it or because of some other way than our willing it, then we could not be said to have done it completely freely, and it will lose its moral significance.

The dispositions cannot be simply motivations that come to us from the outside. They must be seen as posited by the will. This can be only if we make these dispositions our own, that is, if we integrate them into our lives. Thus, the practical feelings, if they are to have full moral significance, must be expressive of our character, not merely emotions that we suffer. Kant's rejection of any moral significance to the emotions presupposed that the emotions were simply things that "happened" to us, that we "suffered"; Kant overlooked the way in which we can integrate the emotions into our lives, so that they can be said to be things that we have a hand in producing, that we posited. Integrating them into our lives requires us, however, to give them a rational ordering. In doing so, we find a certain rationality inherent in the will in our trying to harmonize our dispositions with each other. This harmonization of impulses requires, however, the idea not of simply choosing the best means to satisfy a particular impulse but of ordering them, of sacrificing one for another. Hegel assumes, without much argument but great conviction, that such harmonization cannot

be successfully analyzed in terms of fitting means to ends. Rather, it requires the notion of a whole life interpreted in terms of some at least minimally coherent set of ideals.

What kind of idea of a whole life will do this job? It would seem that such an ordering of desires and impulses would be possible only if there were a general principle that enabled this ordering. Hegel considers Aristotle's notion of well-being as a possible principle for this but rejects it for two reasons. First, there is no such thing as well-being in general. The question "what should I do?" cannot be satisfactorily answered with "Do that which promotes your well-being."³³ If I am trying to decide whether it is best for me to go into business or into academia, the recommendation to do that which is best for my well-being is just no real guide at all. Second, once I have taken the step of trying to rationally order my dispositions, I am committed to an impartial view of my own dispositions. Reason is impartial, and hence if I am to take a rational view of my dispositions, I must look impartially upon them. Only by being able to step back and reflect on these dispositions is this possible.³⁴ I must be able to step back and reflectively (impartially) deliberate on my dispositions without at the same time ceasing to see them as mine, as part of my sense of my own character.

It might seem then that the answer to the question "What should I do?" will rest on some formulation of impartially deliberating on what will best serve my well-being. Nonetheless, however rationally I may order my dispositions, I must still choose between them, and my choices (*Willkür*) in this regard cannot be impartial choices. They are made from the standpoint of my own subjectivity, of what is my interest in the matter.³⁵ Although I am capable of abstracting away from all my desires and assuming an impartial, universal standpoint, nevertheless when I act, I must do so for a particular reason, and my action must be a particular action. This is because of the crucial difference between thought and action. While I can think about things in general, I cannot act in general. My reasons for acting in one way as opposed to another depends on my beliefs about what would constitute *my* leading the best life. Without some interest in that, I would have no motivation to act at all. If it is to be moral motivation, my reasons for leading the best life must also be reasons that are acceptable to other rational agents. But without reasons becoming *my* reasons and not just the reasons of any rational agent in general, it is difficult to say why I should act at all. If moral motivation is possible, it must be possible for me to rationally reflect on my dispositions and

order them according to principles that are both rationally (that is, impartially) acceptable and nonetheless of interest to me as an individual.³⁶

For Hegel this *apparent* conflict between the impartial and personal points of view on our action is the problem that he thinks ethical theory should solve.³⁷ His solution is one of the more novel items in his whole theory: he thinks that only through a theory of what we can call social categories can this be done. It is to his doctrine of social categories that we shall now turn.

CHAPTER SEVEN

From Morality to Ethics: The Theory of Social Categories

I

THE IDEA OF FREEDOM AND RESPECT FOR PERSONS

Hegel's theory of social categories is also his theory of ethics. Indeed, Hegel wants to distinguish ethics from morality, and he thinks that this can be done only through a theory of social categories. Although the basic tenets of Hegel's ethics are in sharp contrast to those of Kant's ethics, the basic concept in both is that of freedom. Hegel, however, works out a different conception of freedom from Kant's conception. In order to see the point of Hegel's ethics, it is first necessary to look at the contrast between Hegelian and Kantian theories with regard to the meaning and importance of freedom in each type of theory.

Both Hegel and Kant are concerned with explaining the possibility of freedom. Like Kant, Hegel treats freedom at first as a problem of the will, but unlike Kant, he does not use the model of legislation to characterize the freedom of the will. His model is one he takes over from his moral psychology. The will is both universal in form (it may act according to impartial principles), yet it is the will of an individual, and the reasons for willing must be those that an individual can find acceptable as an individual. In his "Psychology" Hegel also lays down three conditions for the freedom of the will: the will is free if (1) it is

determined by a content that is universal and (2) by a content that it itself posits and (3) that is posited by the will as embodied in an individual person. The *Philosophy of Right* attempts to articulate how these three conditions may be fulfilled.

Hegel begins with a description of what he calls the "immediate will." This would be a practical counterpart to the idea of immediate knowledge. Just as immediate knowledge would consist in knowing something without having to know anything else, immediate willing would consist in willing something without having to know or will anything else.

Hegel's beginning with the immediate will is in keeping with his overall dialectical strategy of beginning with the simplest idea and trying to show how that simple idea requires us to enlarge our framework of discourse in order to explain its possibility. The immediate would be the expression of a purely individual choice (Hegel uses the term *Willkür*, to describe this). The best candidate for such a choice would be a choice made purely and simply on the basis of our wants. We would be said to will something immediately when we have a want for such and such and act on the basis of that want.

Hegel rejected the very possibility of any immediate knowledge, but he rejects the possibility of immediate willing only as an explanation of *rational* freedom. Although we can always act on the basis of simple wants, we cannot be said to be free when we are doing so. This is because our wants can conflict with each other in ways that undermine the rationality of our willing. We can want to do both X and Y (go to the races, go to the movies), but X and Y may be mutually exclusive. Since many wants will conflict with one another, we will have to have at least some minimal means for ordering and ranking these wants. Otherwise, we are faced with the simple contradiction of saying that we are both free and unfree at the same time (we do what we want when we go to the races, but we do not do what we want when we do not go to the movies).

Choice based simply on what we want cannot be identical with freedom.¹ If being free is doing what one wants, then one must have some criteria for selecting what it is that one wants. Moreover, Hegel rejects the injunction to order the wants and inclinations so as to maximize well-being because he thinks that such a claim cannot help but be vacuous (an argument made in his moral psychology).

Any hedonic (or utilitarian, if one wanted to restrict that term to its Benthamite varieties) theory of rational choice will be inadequate as an explanation of the possibility of rational willing. On the hedonic

view of the will, a rational choice simply comes down to a ranking of various desires on the basis of their intensity and the possibility of their joint realization. However, such a model of rational choice has no place for the kind of practical syllogism worked out in the *Science of Logic*. Its form there was: (1) Φ is good; (2) X (an action) is constitutive of Φ ; (3) a person notes that she must X in order to Φ ; (4) the person notes that she is the type of person for whom Φ is appropriate; (5) therefore, she is to do X. The first premise of such a practical syllogism is not a specification of a *want* but rather of a *good* (Hegel puts an interesting twist to this idea, claiming that the hedonic conception has a matching practical syllogism that is an adequate reconstruction of one possible sphere of life but not of fully constituted social and political life. This argument occurs in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, to which we shall come in section II).

The basic inadequacy of the hedonic view seems to be its apparent conflation of two notions of "want": (1) There is wanting in the sense of a straightforward desire for something. Two wants may conflict in this sense of "want" in that, for example, one may want to be two places at the same time (as when a person wants to go to two different events at the same time). (2) There is also a sense of wanting that is nearly equivalent to holding something to be worthwhile, to be worth doing or experiencing or having.² This is a want in the sense of a valuation of our desires or of the world. The hedonic method of ordering our wants cannot supply us with a sense of this latter usage of "want." It cannot tell us which impulses and inclinations it is better to have. It can only tell us which of our wants are incompatible with each other. It cannot, to put it in Hegelian terms, tell us what are the proper objects of willing. As Hegel puts it, "the impulses should become the rational system of the will's volition."³ Rational willing does not then consist in ordering our impulses into relations of compossibility and the like; it consists of making our values effective in our lives.

The dialectical solution, therefore, to the apparent contradiction found in locating freedom at the level of simple wants is to modify the framework of description and see that the kind of dispositions of character that Hegel characterizes as an "impulse" should coincide with our system of valuations, not merely our simple hedonic wants. The freedom of the will cannot consist of a simple ordering of the various wants of a person into an ordering of consistency and compossibility. It must also consist in the willing of the proper objects of the will. This is accomplished first of all by locating our desires within

a framework of valuation. This does two things: (1) It idealizes them, in Hegel's sense. It renders them intelligible by locating them in a rational moral framework. This makes them posits of the will as opposed to being merely accepted.⁴ (2) It also makes them *my own* desires, rather than ones that are external to me. Both of these are aspects of the same activity from, respectively, the universal and the particular points of view.⁵ It offers the general outline of how a reconciliation between the impartial and the impersonal points of view is possible.

It is in his theory of the freedom of the will that Hegel makes perhaps his most decisive break with Kantian ethical theory and reinforces the Aristotelian elements of his own. Both Hegel and Kant utilize the same abstract description of the freedom of the will, viz., that of the will making itself its own object, or of the will willing itself. They both offer a criticism of the hedonic theory of the freedom of the will and opt for determination of the will by reason. But the similarity ends there.

One difference between Hegel and Kant is, of course, Hegel's desire to reconcile the opposition of impartial and personal reasons. His means for doing so is tied up with his rejection of the basic Kantian model of freedom. Both Hegel and Kant see the will as free when it posits the objects of the will. For Kant, however, this freedom of the will is to be interpreted as the will acting according to its own *idea of law*. This is basic to the Kantian idea of autonomy: the notion of freedom is to be equated with the idea of *self-legislation* (of *autonomos*). The will is free in Kantian theory when it is able to prescribe to itself which *rule* will determine its action. (This obscures the Kantian distinction between hypothetical and categorical imperatives, but that distinction is not important for the present exposition). Because of this view of what constitutes the freedom of the will, Kantian ethics is ultimately an ethics of rules, that is, of which rules and which relations of rules adequately capture the moral quality of the freedom of the will. Since for Kant a moral rule is one specified by reason alone, it is the move from hypothetical to categorical rules (imperatives) that constitutes the move from wants to reason. Kant's criticism of the hedonic model of choice comes down to a criticism of it as giving us only conditional, not categorical rules. Anything less would, for Kant, make morality a contingent affair, resting for its validity and force entirely on arbitrarily distributed natural traits such as straightforward wants and desires to do certain things. For example, Kant rejects the attempt by some thinkers of the Scottish enlightenment to base morality on a trait such as benevolence or sympathy, since such

traits seem to be strong in some people and weak in others, and the distribution of such traits is outside human choice.

Hegel's alternative explanation sees the freedom of the will as residing not in the rules that the will gives itself but in the *objects* of the will. When the will wills a proper object, it may be said to be free, rather than when it simply gives itself its own law or rule. There is no need here to go into any depth concerning Hegel's well-known criticism of Kant on these grounds (we shall look more at it shortly). It is the by now familiar claim (and one that Kantians have always denied) that Kant's rule-oriented ethic must remain an empty formalism, that it cannot provide any content to the will. A rule that is general enough to express a universal demand of reason in Kantian terms cannot possibly give specific content to willing.

Hegel's proposal is to hold that content can come to the will only by means of categories in something like the Kantian sense of them. In Hegel's view, just as there are categories of theoretical reason, there must—if the will is to have any content—also be categories of practical reason. Kant's view, as we might reconstruct it, was that such practical categories would undermine the autonomy of the will, since the categories that are found in theoretical reason are simply the logical forms of judgment synthesized with a form of sensibility (time). Since the categories are thus dependent on experience, practical categories would make the will dependent on forms of experience and thus not autonomous. Therefore, the will must be formal, on Kantian terms, if it is to retain its autonomy.

Hegel's speculative approach to categorial philosophy allows him to sidestep this Kantian hesitation. Categories are justified as explanations of the possibility of other categories, not just of the possibility of experience. Reason can deliver content not by spinning the categories out of itself *per se* but by showing how one set of categories explains the possibility of other sets. The categories themselves are in part reconstructions from experience; Hegel does not hold that reason simply produces them *ex nihilo*.⁶

Although we may think universal thoughts, we must will particular actions. Therefore, we must will something determinate if we are to act at all. One way of getting determinate content for the will would be simply to act on our straightforward desires. On Hegel's interpretation of freedom, however, that would not count as completely free willing. Since our desires are not fully posited by us, they cannot be the basis for an adequate conception of free willing. We must will something determinate, but it must coincide with our system

of valuations. Indeed, it is when our motivationally efficacious desires coincide with our valuations that we are free. The determinate unities of motivationally efficacious desires and valuations constitutes the proper objects of the will. These proper objects, however, are found within determinate types of social life. The unions of desire and valuation must be interpreted in terms of particular historical forms of communal living.

For Hegel, the will is free when it wills according to its nature—when it wills its proper objects. The Hegelian theory is concerned therefore with a theory of the proper objects of the will rather than with the relations among rules. This gives the Hegelian theory a completely different look from any type of Kantian theory. Kantian theories typically are concerned with the deductive (and other formal) relations among rules. Among the standard concerns of Kantian theory is the search for some single moral truth—such as the categorical imperative — or some minimal set of moral truths along with some objective and formal procedure with which one can derive the other moral truths. Hegel's theory, on the other hand, is a theory of what are and are not the fully proper objects of the will. His contention is that this cannot be given (1) outside of a theory of what kinds of basic social categories there are; and (2) outside of a theory of the concrete mores and ethos of a culture.

Because of his break with Kantianism in his understanding of freedom, Hegel is able in an important way to break also with Kant's understanding of the principle of respect for persons. To be a *person* for Hegel is to be awarded a certain status.⁷ It is not merely to be a *human* (an organism) but to have a certain "capacity for rights" (*Rechtsfähigkeit*).⁸ This also implies that the person is free in the Hegelian sense.⁹

This leads Hegel to a different basic ethical principle than Kant: "Hence the imperative of right is: 'Be a person and respect others as persons.'"¹⁰ Although this sounds like a Kantian claim, it is not. To be a person is to be a self-conscious, rational, free agent—that is, an entity that is capable of acting in accordance with a will that has the proper objects as the objects of its willing. Kant seemed to identify respect for persons with respect for their autonomy, since it was the capacity for moral autonomy that was the morally significant thing about them—in fact, was the very criterion for their being moral persons at all.¹¹ Respect for persons was called by Kant respect for the dignity of persons, and Kant identified this kind of respect for dignity with respect for autonomy.

Hegel did not—and on the basis of his theory need not—identify respect for the *person* with respect for the person's *autonomy*. Respect for dignity and respect for autonomous choice will not on the Hegelian view be the same. (As we shall later see in section V, this has important consequences for this theory of the state.) Although respect for persons is only an "abstract right," it does apply to all those entities that satisfy the criteria of being persons.¹² Personhood then is not a merely descriptive category but also an evaluative one. To describe something as a person is to locate it within the moral world, that which practical mind (or, in Hegel's terms, objective mind) produces.

The first moral features to be considered of "personhood" in the abstract concern the basic rights appropriate to persons in general. This occurs in the section of the *Philosophy of Right* called "Abstract Right," which is concerned with the general and abstract principles of ethical life, independently of their being willed by any particular agent (the general principles, as it were, of right and wrong). The basic moral claims of "Abstract Right" constitute the classical natural rights of life, liberty, and property. Moreover, the basic injunctions of abstract right are negative in character. Their general principle is: "Do not injure personhood and what follows from it."¹³

This is a significant move in Hegel's theory; he does not argue that we should produce more of the basic quality of personhood, nor does he make any kind of maximizing claim about persons. He is content, rather, to make the negative claim that one must not destroy or injure personhood as an abstract duty. More importantly, Hegel does not convert the claims of abstract right into demands to respect the choices of people *per se*, only to respect their personhood and avoid injuries to that.

II

MASTERS, SLAVES, AND MORALITY

The arguments about personhood rest on more general considerations not provided in the *Philosophy of Right* about what would explain the possibility of such an acknowledgment of others as persons. These arguments are to be found in what Hegel calls his phenomenology of mind in a section concerning the relation between masters and slaves.¹⁴ Hegel makes the argument that mutual acknowledgment

(*Anerkennung*) of persons as having the dignity that is due to them as persons is possible only within a higher unity of selves and world. His phenomenology is an explanation of how it is possible that mind can appear as subjectivity in an objective world. To do this, he delineates the structure of an "I's" act of self-consciousness when one of the elements in the world of which it is aware is another self-consciousness, that is, what having another person as the object of one's will entails in the abstract. Hegel makes the whole intersubjective context of human action and relating oneself to oneself turn on what it means to acknowledge other persons—in their feelings and their freedom, their status as persons—and to have them acknowledge oneself.

He begins with the language of desire or appetite, a description of human wants and actions in terms of means/ends rationality and of satisfaction of one's own desires. He says that a description of ourselves in this manner sees the object as having "no true reality,"¹⁵ meaning that the object functions only as a means in the person's scheme of desires and thoughts. Indeed, the object can have no intrinsic worth; it is incapable of demanding any respect, as it were, on its own. Its worth can only be instrumental, and it can figure in the person's scheme only to fill some "lack" of the person.¹⁶ Hegel notes that as construed, desire is "destructive and in its *content*, selfish,"¹⁷ that is, the object of this type of simple desire can be specified only in terms of the person's own self-interested motivations.¹⁸

The problem is that at the level of desire, all objects have value only as means to my own ends. Yet when I confront another, I confront another person, not merely a thing. Hegel wants to say that there are contradictions here between (1) how I *must* confront the other, viz., as a person and how I even *could* confront the other given this framework of desire; and (2) how at the level of desire each would be compelled to treat the other as a thing, "natural and corporeal," while both as persons are "completely free subjects and may not be treated as . . . merely natural things."¹⁹ The other as a person makes a claim on you, an ethical claim eliciting respect. At the level of desire, however, there is no place for ethics in this sense, because the kind of acknowledgment of each other that is a condition of the possibility of ethical strategies is necessarily lacking.

This basic contradiction results in the dialectic of master and slave, which turns on the tension between the acknowledgment of the other as a person (which is always there) and the refusal founded at the level in which we speak only of personal desires at which the con-

frontation between the two individuals operate. Each must attempt to subjugate the other, to compel the other to acknowledge her while withholding acknowledgment of him. Each perceives everything in her practical field to be an instrumentality for her alone and perceives herself to be the only end in itself in that field. But each also perceives the other to perceive her as only an instrumentality. To the extent that each is intelligible to herself or himself as the only end in itself and is aware of the other as making the same claim, each must live the contradiction and struggle with the other to get him or her to cede that claim to be an end in itself. Either there is the death of one, or one person opts for life and surrenders the claim to full acknowledgment. This latter person becomes the slave and must work for the master. The slave, on egoistic grounds, yields to the other to preserve his or her life—yields, that is, on egoistic grounds to being only an instrumentality in the other's world. But when the slave begins to work for the master, so Hegel thinks, a subtle transformation occurs. When the slave begins to work "not in the exclusive interest of his own individuality, his desire is expanded into being not only the desire of this particular individual but also the desire of another."²⁰

This is a reconstruction of the way in which others *appear* in our world, viz., as embodied persons demanding mutual acknowledgment. We can reconstruct this appearance on several levels. At one level, we have a Hobbesian world of competing desires; the other person can serve only as another instrumentality in my world, as having no intrinsic worth. But that is to make the relations with others only a contingent one; we would not necessarily need the other. However, we actually do; we demand acknowledgment from the other. If I am the only noninstrumental value in my world, then my perception of an other holding the same view of the world demands that we seek to abolish that other viewpoint, that the other person acknowledge me as the only noninstrumental value. At the level of desire, the contradiction between these competing claims cannot be solved ethically, for there is no language in which an ethical solution could be framed. At best, we might strike an equilibrium, refusing acknowledgment to each other but coexisting. This coexistence, however, would and could be only an unstable one. There would be nothing except mutual threats to hold it in force. Even a Hobbesian sovereign to which we might cede all our rights to independent self-determination would not resolve this dilemma, for I could never (given this limited structure of desire) actually cede my right. I could only pretend to do so and wait for the right moment to reassert myself.

In any event, an organization of life along Hobbesian lines would never allow for anything more than a nonintrinsic connection between people (a social perhaps, but never a moral or political connection between people).

What we have at the level of desire is a hypothetical situation that moves on two levels of a sense of "goodness" but necessarily fails on its own to move on to a third and essential level. These first two levels would be: (1) *things* being good for a person; (2) a *person's* being good for others. This leads to the conflict that can be resolved only by forcing one of the people to accept being made into an instrumentality (being good) for the other person. One is left with a dialectic of master and slave unless some provision for *mutual* acknowledgment is made, and this is impossible at the level of desire.²¹ The third step must be from one's being good for others to a non-instrumentalist notion of one's goodness, of one's worth as an individual. Hegel calls this "universal self-consciousness": awareness of ourselves as sharing a world with others, of being ingredient in a world of multiple perspectives, of not everything's being good as a means to my own ends—that is, awareness of ourselves as being noninstrumental goods and of others as being likewise so. Self-respect, awareness of oneself as worthy of respect, is not enough. One must acknowledge the other as having an identical claim.

Hegel creates an imaginative fiction in which the slave by hard work on things and by rationally transforming the world gains this self-respect. The master, who has become dependent on the slave's work, must finally cede full acknowledgment to the slave. Both of them mutually acknowledge each other as entities worthy of respect.²² This is an appealing but not strictly necessary moment in the master/slave dialectic (although historically, this piece of imaginative fiction made a great impact on the imagination of at least one individual, Karl Marx). This idea of universal self-consciousness translates into an awareness of reason, a set of objective (public), normative principles that both define and regulate our dealings with one another. The self posits itself as a *co-member*, as it were, of the moral world.

The unity of self and world is thus integrated into a higher unity of *selves* and world. It is a higher unity in that it is a more complex unity than that merely of self and world. At that level, the subjectivity of the other person makes only a problematic appearance, for it can appear only as the object of desire. The stage of universal self-consciousness, however, is the stage where each acknowledges the subjectivity of the other, that is, the other's status as a person, not merely

as simply one more object of desire. It is in fact the conceptual instability of the perception of each as object of desire and as self-conscious person that propels the move to the higher unity. In the dual structures (two people, A and B) of the higher unity, A is conscious of herself as being perceived by a person, B, conscious of himself as perceiving a person, A, conscious of B's perceiving her and vice versa. More important, though, than this complex structure of mutually interposed perceptions and self-perceptions is the higher unity of multiple people sharing a common world. (In this way, Hegel hopes to explain how respect for a person as a person is possible without having to invoke Kant's noumenal/phenomenal distinction.)

This conception of what Hegel calls universal self-consciousness is the forerunner to the Hegelian conception of the common good. The mutual acknowledgment of each other as worthy of respect is possible only within this higher unity. The content of this higher unity, so Hegel argues, is constituted in part by the shared self-identities of the members of a society that make their appearances in the ethos of a society, its ethical life or *Sittlichkeit*. Within this ethos, a *common* good is possible. It is a unity that each constitutes that is higher, but that does not submerge the claims of individuality. Within the understanding of such an ethos and common good, genuine practical action is possible.

At the level of desire, practical action is possible only under the form of the syllogism: (1) Hugo wants Φ to be the case; (2) Hugo believes that Φ can be brought about only if he first does X; (3) therefore, Hugo does X. Φ may be a good of some sort (like world peace or whatever) but its goodness plays no role here; it is Hugo's mere want that is important. This form of the practical syllogism is adequate only for that type of action in which the world is seen as a field of instrumentalities to satisfy our wants. For the fully constituted practical social world, the practical syllogism takes the form that Hegel gave to it in the *Science of Logic*: (1) Φ is good; (2) X (an action) is constitutive of Φ ; (3) a person notes that she must X in order to Φ ; (4) the person notes that she is the type of person for whom Φ is appropriate; (5) therefore, she is to do X. But the claim that something specific is good is derivative from an understanding of what is good in types of socially determinate situations for types of people fulfilling certain types of roles and functions within that social unity. The "good" found in such practical syllogisms depends, that is, on the shared identities found beyond the level of masters and slaves. The move in the *Phenomenology* from desire to universal self-consciousness is thus

the concrete example that Hegel had in mind in his general argument in the *Science of Logic*.

The move to a higher level is a move to a true object of the will, to what Hegel describes as true freedom. At the level of desire, the will does not yet have its fully proper objects. The unity of itself with the world is incomplete. This higher unity on its own, however, cannot give any content to the will. That will be the reason for a doctrine of ethical life.

Considerations like these give Hegel his reasons for beginning the *Philosophy of Right* with the categories of property and contract. Keeping to his overall strategy of dialectical argumentation, Hegel asks: What is the minimal set of categories that explain the possibility of a practically structured world? Or, to put it differently, what are the minimal conditions for establishing a set of shared identities? It is very much like the beginning of the *Science of Logic*, with its questions concerning the minimal conditions for thinking about the world. The goal of the dialectic is to show that the minimal conditions are not enough, that they are intelligible only when seen as embedded in a larger set of categories.

Property satisfies the conditions for being the minimal category of social life. Hegel says, "a person must translate his freedom into an external sphere in order to exist as Idea."²³ The Idea, we remember, is a general map of the world; the practical Idea is a general map of the practically structured world in terms of the goods found within it that give reasons for action. The human being must become part of the practical world in order to be a person; a social identity ("to exist as Idea") must be established. The category of property explains how this is minimally possible. Hegel does not begin with something like the family because the category of the family already involves social roles, the notion of rights, and so on. It is therefore not as minimal an explanation as the category of property. Through property, I confront the other as a bearer of rights. An abstract practical world is thereby established that has within it only the minimum of shared identity. In the practically structured world of property owners, there is only the most abstract version of the practical world: it is a world without any concrete roles, in which people confront each other only as property owners, as bearers of property rights. (It is worth noting that for Hegel there would be no natural rights to property in the state of nature. The encounter in the state of nature would only be at the level of desire, without there being any notion of "rights" present at all. Part of the failure of much classical social contract theory

was that it presented the encounter of people in the state of nature as being among bearers of rights that properly belong only to an already practically structured world.)

That explains why one would begin an explanation of the practical world with the category of property. How, though, does one explain the acquisition of property? Hegel uses the idea of possession to explain this. This idea minimally integrates the individual interest of the agent with a more universal interest. The minimal interest of the agent is seeing his or her needs satisfied, having some realm of security, and so on. The agent has a more universal interest in becoming a social being. Possession of property constitutes that minimal integration of personal desire and general claim. Or, as Hegel would put it, it makes my will minimally actual in that it is the minimal way in which I become part of the Idea. In our terms, it offers the minimal integration of impartial and personal reasons.

How is it possible to acquire the property of somebody else? Only through the free exchange of property, that is, contract. The practical world of property owners becomes the still abstract but somewhat richer world of individuals entering into contractual relations with each other. Again, it is in the particular interest of the agent to be able to transfer property with some security, and this particular interest also serves the universal interest of creating a tighter social bond. Of course, the world of contractual relations does not fully integrate the demands of the individual interest of the agent with the more universal demands of reason. It can be in an agent's interest, for example, to violate the contract. A world of purely contractual relations would therefore have to include some idea of how to rectify injuries to persons and to contractually established states of affairs. It would have to include, that is, some measure of compensation and punishment, Hegel thinks, to be a more intelligible practical world.

Punishment, however, must be distinguishable from revenge. Revenge is a personal act, done because of some slight or harm to oneself or somebody else, whose force may or may not be proportionate to the harm caused; the extent of revenge and its severity have no intrinsic limits. Punishment, on the other hand, is proportionate; punishment whose severity exceeds the harm done is wrong. Punishment, unlike revenge, is not a personal matter. To distinguish the two, we need a conception of social life as structured not just by rights. It must also include the notion of obligations. Obligation, however, involves a richer notion of the agent than that of merely the bearer of rights. It involves an idea of free willing and of imposing

obligations on oneself and others. This leads to the richer form of social life that Hegel calls "morality."

III

THE ABSTRACTNESS OF MORALITY

Morality is characterized as a form of ethical life in which the focus is on the individual will as positing the content of moral action.²⁴ For Hegel, "morality" denotes not just a theoretical stance but also a form of life in which our obligations are fixed by what we choose, individually and socially, and in which the basic building blocks of ethics are taken to be individuals freely willing certain things. He calls this the "moral standpoint."²⁵ Morality, moreover, is said to constrain us in our pursuit of our individual desires; it is the element of the "universal" controlling and taking absolute precedence over the "particular." Hegel distinguishes between morality (*Moralität*) and ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*). For Hegel, morality is that area of ethical life in which our obligations and responsibilities arise only where we have freely willed the action in question.²⁶ Ethical life, on the other hand, involves an understanding of the goods and roles within a particular culture. If one accepts the idea that an action is moral only if it is willed by the agent, then it would seem that the agent can be morally responsible only for that which the agent freely wills (I am using "agent" in this context instead of Hegel's own term, "subject"²⁷).

The system of morality as a social practice leads in a quite straightforward way to a Kantian conception of ethical life in which the ethical is identified with acting in accordance with rules that would be valid for all rational agents. The standpoint of morality is the standpoint of "anyone"; morality is ethics done from the standpoint of complete impartiality. Such abstract impartiality will, so Hegel argues, always turn out to be practically empty. A rule that applies to any rational agent will not be able to generate any particular ethical content for specific people. Hegel thinks that this is not merely a deficiency of explanation. Morality is also a deficient form of social practice when it (morality) is divorced from the larger context of ethical life.

Hegel's rebuttal of the Kantian theory takes several stages. The first stage casts doubt on the force of using the notion of "willing something" (without a theory of the proper objects of the will) to do

the work that Kantian theory has for it. For Kantian theory, the moral quality of something has to do with its being freely willed. However, what does it mean to will freely an action? Is it to will the action or the consequences of the action or both? Hegel offers three versions of a Kantian style of argument for answering these questions, each of which turns out to be inadequate as a full explanation of the possibility of ethical life. In doing so, he does not, however, even attempt to give a minimal textual analysis of Kant's ethical system. Rather, he takes each of these three versions as developments of the natural logic of morality and concludes that Kantianism is the natural culmination of the idea of making morality (in this sense) paramount.

Each of these three arguments concerns the implications of saying that the moral quality of an action concerns only the agent's free willing of that action. First of all, we could see freely willing an action to be equivalent to purposefully trying to produce some outcome in the world. Free willing on this view would be analyzed as "willing that such and such be the case." Which outcomes, however, are to be attributed to the agent's willing? All the outcomes of the action, or only those that were both foreseen and willed by the agent? Morality demands that the latter be the case, since to attribute nonwilled outcomes to the agent would violate the basic condition of moral willing, that it be free and purposeful.²⁸ Something that happens as a result of the action but that was not in the agent's purpose is therefore not a part of the action per se, and the agent is not morally responsible for it.²⁹ (Hegel's word for purpose is *Vorsatz*; the word that he uses for responsibility is *Schuld*, which also carries the meaning of "liability" and "guilt" with it; most of the examples he gives concern responsibility for criminal action).

However, purposeful production of outcomes is not sufficient for morally responsible action. An action must also include an element of self-reflection in order for it to be an action for which there is moral responsibility.³⁰ It is not enough just to be an agent. The agent must also see herself as an agent. Hegel introduces a bit of obscure terminology to explain this: the agent must not only have the action as her purpose (*Vorsatz*) but also as her intention (*Absicht*).³¹ One must not just act according to one's purposes; one must also *intentionally* act according to these purposes. Intentionality requires the element of self-reflectiveness. Therefore, unless the element of self-reflection is present, the will cannot be said to have posited the action, and the action cannot be free in the strong sense required by morality.³² A mentally incompetent person may be said to act according to his

purposes (jump out the window in order to fly), but he cannot be said to be responsible for the action, since this cannot be said in this sense to be done intentionally. This is misleading on Hegel's part, since he seems to be not really concerned with the element of *intention* so much as he is concerned with element of *understanding* involved in such action. The mentally incompetent person does not understand what he or she is doing, and that is what makes the act unfree. Hegel's examples show that this is what he has in mind.³³

As Hegel sees it, the argument for Kantian rule-morality thus must go something like the following. Morality, if it is to be reflective, rational, and voluntary, must be done according to some "universal," which we can take to be Hegel's allusion to a Kantian type of moral rule (this alludes, of course, to Hegel's understanding of the "universal" as it appears in his *Logic*).³⁴ The intention of an action is reflective and rational only if (1) the agent can self-consciously formulate a universal rule that is valid for him and for others; and (2) it is this rule upon which he acts (which forms his intention). The resulting action is voluntary to the extent that the will self-consciously posits the rule (the "universal").

Hegel finds two things to be incoherent in this view. First, this severely downplays the role of good and bad luck in the moral life. B and W both join the military and are assigned by lottery to different units. B ends up making pastry for a unit that never goes to battle. W ends up in a unit that commits ghastly war crimes, and W plays some part. B would have taken part if he had been presented the opportunity, but luckily for him, he was never given the chance. The only difference between W and B is one of luck. But if luck played a role in determining the morality of an action, then the moral quality of an action would not be completely dependent on the agent's willing, which would contradict the basic ideal of morality. Good luck and bad luck, however, essentially belong to the nature of action. The question is what place for the element of luck exists in morality as a form of ethical life. Hegel thinks, for example, that in willing an action in general, one is implicitly assuming moral responsibility for bad outcomes that are the result of bad luck on one's part.³⁵ Morality, however, has no room for luck in it.

His second objection concerns the necessary impartiality of morality as form of life. To the extent that I am capable of taking up an impartial ("universal") standpoint on my interests, I am capable of considering my own welfare from an impartial point of view, taking the interests of nobody in particular as my standpoint (or, conversely,

taking the interests of all as my standpoint). On this view, I act morally when I act according to reflectively formulated rules that are valid for everyone and that take the welfare of all impartially into account.

However, if we accept one of the central points of Hegel's moral psychology, viz., that an agent can act only when that action is one for which he could be motivated as an individual, then this cannot be enough. Yet another condition must be added to the willing. In addition to the impartial reasons for acting that a universal rule would give him, the agent must have a personal reason for acting—not merely a reason for “one” to act but for “me” to act. A “good” reason for acting must be one that the agent as an individual can find good. A consideration of a person's action that focuses only on whether it was done in accordance with a reflectively formulated rule leaves out the actor's interest in the action.³⁶ Hegel calls the object of the agent's particular interest in an action the agent's welfare.³⁷ He holds that morality's view therefore fails to respect one of the conditions of moral motivation that it claims to embody: the necessity of the agent's finding some interest in the action.³⁸ This account of moral willing cannot explain why the particular agent should prefer the impartial concern with the welfare or rights of all over his own welfare when that impartial concern strongly conflicts with his own particular welfare (especially when his life is in danger, as when a starving man must steal bread in order to live³⁹). At this level of moral explanation, there remains the unexplained move from the agent's rational, intentional, reflective concern with his own welfare to his concern with the welfare of all.

In order to answer these objections, the logic of morality leads to the conclusion that the moral good cannot be anything but a universal rule that, if it is to be consistent with a sound theory of moral motivation, must include some reason for particular people to *want* to will this universal rule. This is the postulate of the Kantian moral good: the moral good is that universal rule that is also in the interest of the agent as a rational agent in general to will. It turns out therefore that there is indeed a good to be found in morality, the good of absolute freedom. It is *better* to live as an agent acting reflectively, rationally, and voluntarily than it is to live a life that is structured by unchosen goods or by values that are given to you rather than being chosen by you.

This ideal of agency, unfortunately, leads to an empty conception of both the agent and the moral rules that it tries to promulgate.⁴⁰ The Kantian conception of the rational agent in general is just not

specific enough to generate the specific goods that make up ethical life. There is no personal reason for a rational agent in general to act. He or she would have no interests, or at least none that could serve as the grounds for ethical motivation. Through its emphasis on the individual's positing the content of action from an abstract and detached viewpoint, Kantian morality is led to the conception of an act of willing that transcends any particularity of character, situation, or desire. Hegel had noted this in his account of moral psychology. Kantian morality overlooks all particularity on the part of the agent because of Kant's belief that making moral action dependent on any particular factor would make it dependent on morally arbitrary factors, such as upbringing, natural inclinations, and so on. The internal logic of morality thus drives it to an idea of the agent as free in a sense that transcends everything that one can find in the empirical world. It thus ends up as an empty doctrine that fails to explain the possibility of ethical life.⁴¹

IV

FROM MORES TO SOCIAL CATEGORIES

Hegel is not rejecting Kantian morality in toto. As Hegel reinterprets it, the Kantian theory argues successfully that the will must be free in order for morality to make any sense—indeed, for there to be any sense at all to the concepts of right and wrong—but it cannot provide any objects of the will. The will in merely willing its own universality in the form of rules is left at the level of an empty formalism.⁴²

The failure of the level of discourse in "Morality" is the impetus for Hegel's invocation of the notion of *Sittlichkeit*, ethical life, to explain the possibility of ethical judgment. There is no single term in English that adequately renders what Hegel means by this. The meaning as Hegel takes it includes the mores, ethos, and conventional morality of a particular society (until now, I have been using the terms "ethics" and "ethical life" to refer to what Hegel means by *Sittlichkeit*). The appeal to *Sittlichkeit* also, he thinks, will allow him to establish the kind of reconciliation of Kantian and Aristotelian themes for which he has been striving.

One of his theses is that the content of individual morality must in some sense be derived from the mores, the ethos, and the con-

ventions of the society and culture of which the individual is a part. We must now look at his arguments for this claim, what he thinks is entailed by it, and how he understands its force.

The mores or ethos of a culture make up for Hegel the concrete moral world, the Idea.⁴³ Hegel is not arguing for any simple-minded acceptance of every part of one's culture's ethos, nor is his thesis necessarily a conservative one. In order to understand it, one must set it against what I take to be Hegel's critique of the idea of moral autonomy, where autonomy is interpreted as individual self-legislation. If this is taken as meaning that the individual is the ultimate source and authority of her moral principles, and those principles are binding on her only if she chooses and/or accepts them, then morality will turn out to be a paradoxical affair. If the individual is to be morally autonomous in this sense, then ultimately something like her own conscience must be the final arbiter of right and wrong.

This is, however, inconsistent with any adequate conception of moral objectivity. Any attempt to describe our moral lives—that is to say, our moral world—in such terms will contradict the basic conception of morality developed in the considerations of the relations between masters and slaves, viz., that we are answerable to objective demands whether or not we choose them. Hegel argues, “conscience is therefore subject to the judgment of its truth or falsity, and when it appeals only to itself for a decision, it is directly at variance with what it wishes to be, namely the rule for a mode of conduct that is rational, absolutely valid [*an und für sich gültigen*] and universal.”⁴⁴ One requires *Sittlichkeit* to explain how the objectivity of morality could be compatible with the autonomy of the person. At the level of discourse of “Morality” one cannot distinguish one's private convictions from what is objectively morally good, yet the two are clearly distinct notions. As Hegel would put it, the subjectivity of personal conviction is not enough to confer a *moral* status on one's principles. One must go beyond one's subjectivity to a notion of public, shared principles. This distinction can be made only if one brings in an understanding of accepted rules and practices. One cannot, for instance, understand the moral claims of being a parent without some understanding of the role of the family in one's culture and the goods and ideals present in that role. One must look to the cultural world for concrete content for one's moral judgments.

Why need these principles, however, be the actual ones of a particular culture? Hegel's appeal to convention seems to have at least

two components to it, which may be called the moral and the interpretive components. The moral component in the appeal to the mores of a culture rests on its being an appeal to a moral consensus. One is *prima facie* morally obligated, so the Hegelian thesis might be put, to give pride of place to the moral principles of one's culture rather than one's own principles should they conflict. One has an obligation to act according to objective principles. Since one cannot be sure if one's own intuitions about those principles are correct, one has an obligation to check them against the judgments of others. Since the mores of a culture are the embodiment of others' judgments, one is obligated to give pride of place to those mores. The appeal to moral consensus is not therefore a simple-minded appeal to majoritarian feelings about what is right. It is an appeal to a content larger than one's subjectivity to provide a test of one's convictions.

The appeal to mores also has an interpretive component. In part, this was already alluded to by speaking of the moral necessity of going beyond the individual's merely private convictions. In order to understand an ethical principle such as "give due concern to the welfare of others," one must appeal to the concrete institutions, roles, and mores of one's own culture. I cannot understand what it means in this case to give due (not exaggerated, not too underplayed) concern to others without an appeal to the mores of my culture. To know what one *ought* to do, one must look to the way things *are* done. To give due concern to, for example, a grieving friend will be different than to a complete stranger. It is not, moreover, simply a matter of making the correct conventional gestures to express some general moral principle; it is to do what in specific *counts* as giving due concern. Without an understanding of the relationships involved in the various forms of life in a culture, one cannot understand what is ethically required of one.⁴⁵ The interpretive component is also necessary for a proper understanding of the first premise about goods of the practical syllogism as advanced in the *Science of Logic*. In order to know what is good, however, I must look to the *Sittlichkeit* of my own culture, and that will always involve elements of interpretation as to what these mores actually require and do not require.

The moral world (the practical Idea) is a complex set of principles, rights, and duties that are like a "second nature" to the individuals living in it.⁴⁶ It stands to the individual as an intersubjective, shared set of background principles that constitute the ethical world for that individual. This need not be a strictly conservative thesis, as if Hegel

were saying that all conventional morality is fine as it stands, or that one always has an obligation to obey and uphold all the moral conventions of one's culture, however grounded in vicious prejudice they might be. Moral argument and debate, so Hegel's thesis can be taken, always proceeds within the ambit of a presupposed moral world, of a set of shared convictions. The arguments of reform will almost always turn on alleged inconsistencies and incoherences within a moral framework, rather than being attacks on it from without.⁴⁷

Nonetheless, Hegel thinks that a mere appeal to convention is not enough. One must have some means of evaluation of the goodness and rightness of convention beyond an appeal to consistency; one must also have some anchoring points in terms of which the interpretation of the requirements of a convention can be made. He has two proposals for doing this. First, as the integration of "Abstract Right" and "Morality," ethical life must preserve the general claims of those domains. Where it can be shown that a conventional understanding flouts, for instance, the right to liberty that people have by virtue of being persons or denigrates the notion of moral autonomy, then it is *prima facie* unjustified. The levels of "Abstract Right" and "Morality" offer general bases for criticism of any conventional ordering, and it is always open to argument that alternative social arrangements might be better strategies for realizing these general values than existing conventions. This can be done by a reinterpretation of the requirements of a convention. "Abstract Right" and "Morality" set very general limits on the kind of interpretation that can be made about some existing set of conventions. This kind of appeal will itself involve an appeal to mores but is more than a mere appeal to make the existing conventions consistent. It involves a substantive appeal to rights and liberties, however general that appeal might be.

Hegel's second proposal is far more ambitious and involves the construction of social and political categories to match in a concrete way the kinds of very general categories developed in the *Science of Logic*. Hegel himself never uses the terms "social categories" or "political categories," but there are a definite set of ideas in his work that can be so labeled.⁴⁸ A social category (I shall use the term generally to include both social and political unities) expresses a certain type of unity between people. It is an explanation of how it would be possible that people are bound together in the moral world in basic ways that realize ethical values such as respect for human dignity and freedom along with promoting human flourishing.

There are of course many different ways in which people in any society are joined with others: churches, clubs, schools, associations, political parties, and so on. These also (of course) vary from society to society. In calling something a social *category*, however, one is referring to some basic type of unity that explains how the realization of basic moral ideals would be possible. It is clear that Hegel thinks that there are such basic types of unity between people. He speaks of the "ethical order" (*das Sittliche*) as "the system of these determinations of the Idea that constitute its *rationality*."⁴⁹ The system's "moments are those ethical powers that regulate the life of individuals."⁵⁰ Individuals are the "accidents" of this substance, "and it is in individuals that those ethical powers have their representation [*Vorstellung*], their form of appearance [*erscheinende Gestalt*] and actuality."⁵¹ In distinction from some humdrum empirical classification, a social category then is an expression of a basic form of unity among people—a structure of mutual acknowledgment—in which various moral principles (rights, duties, and virtues) are embodied and which explains their possibility. Hegel calls it "ethical substance."⁵² It is a category in the sense that it is a basic type of union for that culture and serves to explain the possibility of the realization of ethical ideals in that culture. Such categories are both the result of human interaction (they have their "form of appearance and actuality" in individuals) and are independent of individuals in that the rights, roles, duties, and virtues found in them are independent of the individuals choosing them.⁵³

For Hegel there are three such social categories: the family, civil society and the state. These social categories not only provide content to general moral principles; they also are "the living good."⁵⁴ The "substance" (social category) of such moral objects, of *Sittlichkeit*, is "the good, i.e., the objective is filled with subjectivity."⁵⁵ In the duties, rights, goods, and virtues intrinsic to such unions "the individual finds his liberation."⁵⁶ The articulation of such categories is thus the articulation of the practical Idea, of the moral world of a culture. They constitute the way in which we conceive and think of the moral world to ourselves. As social categories, they structure not only the shared understandings that we have of this moral world; they also structure our own sense of identity and of what would be the good life.

The social categories are the basic types of concrete acknowledgment between persons. They express the basic unities of selves and world in which members of a culture can and do acknowledge one another. A doctrine of social categories need not be (as Hegel's ethics

is often popularly taken to be) a doctrine of totalitarian fusion of individuals into some organic whole, nor need it be a doctrine of some social or political authority compelling individuals to realize their true or noncorrupt nature. Rather, as a theory of the basic types of concrete acknowledgments between individuals, it is a doctrine of the basic types of *ethical relationships* we may entertain with others. Hegel thus stays true to his program. Rather than offer an ethical theory in terms of rules and principles, he is concerned to offer a theory of ethical relationships that explain the possibility of concrete rules and principles. These ethical relationships are the fully proper objects of the will.

Hegel's theory thus takes a much different form than it would if it were a theory of rules and principles. It does not present, for example, a basic principle in the form of a rule (like the categorical imperative) and then deduce other rules from it. Rather, it presents an articulation of types of social unity (social categories) that provide the will with its proper objects.

More importantly, the social categories explain how human self-determination may be concretely embodied in types of social unity, of reciprocal acknowledgment. The major Hegelian thesis is that these types of social unities are therefore the concrete realizations of freedom. There is no such thing, for Hegel, as abstract freedom. Our choices and our actions always appear against a given concrete background of desires and wants and values.⁵⁷ Freedom arises not when one does what one wants but when one can *will* it—in Hegel's words, "the impulse should be the rational system of the various determinations of the will."⁵⁸ For our various motivations (what Hegel refers to in his philosophical psychology as our practical feelings and our impulses) to become subject to such a criterion, there must exist a background of intersubjective, shared standards. Without this social background of mores and conventions, the freedom of the will could at best be a matter of simply personal choice (*Willkür*) and not true freedom.⁵⁹ Without the types of social unities out of which flow these various principles, this shared context of choice could not exist. Hence, so Hegel argues, these social unities are far from being restrictions on self-determination. They are the very soul of self-determination. As deployed in a philosophical theory, they explain how self-determination is concretely possible.⁶⁰ They provide the unions in terms of which people can fashion a full idea of the self, of the proper relationships and goals of life without which rational choice would not be concretely possible.

What, however, are Hegel's criteria for deciding on the relative goodness of the specific conceptions of rightness and goodness found in the basic types of social unity? On the one hand, any argument for the goodness of one type of conception over another must itself involve appeal to mores. It must involve appeal to accepted understandings of human motivation and so on. It must, that is, be circular in the sense that it must use the culture's own concepts to criticize and interpret itself, and it must develop specific conceptions of these general concepts at work in the culture. This must be one sense of Hegel's well-known claim, "Whatever happens, every individual is a child of his own times; so philosophy too is its own time apprehended in thoughts. It is just as absurd to fancy that a philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as it is to fancy that an individual can overleap his own age, jump over Rhodes."⁶¹

Such circular arguments involve what Hegel refers to as the Spirit of a culture. The Spirit (*Geist*) of any culture consists of the ideas, norms, values, and ideals in terms of which the culture understands itself and interprets itself to itself—what Hegel calls the self-consciousness of a culture. This includes things such as the role of parents in a society, the place of a family in the larger social context, whether one should tip in restaurants, how should one behave toward business associates, when it is appropriate to deceive, and so forth (the list can obviously go on forever). Without some understanding of the ethical life, one can give no content to the notion of free willing, for no objects can be specified for the will outside of these kinds of relationships. The Spirit of a culture expresses the implicit orderings of those goods found in its ethical life.

Each type of social category is an expression of a basic kind of unity among individuals that gives content to their willing. A theory of social categories explains the possibility of the very general demands of "Abstract Right" and "Morality" within a specific cultural setting. If Hegel had only a doctrine of ethical life, he would indeed be the cultural relativist that he is often popularly taken to be. His theory would come down to the claim that the content of willing comes from convention, and that no appeal to anything other than convention can be made. The appeal to convention is certainly part of his claim. The theory of social categories offers, however, much more than that. It offers a kind of rational reconstruction of a culture, explaining what kinds of social unities make possible the culture's recognition and embodiment of certain abstract ideals. It is in these social unities that we find the true objects of the will. Only from within such social

unities, therefore, can the individual find his or her freedom. Hegel's theory is of the kinds of ethical relationships that we have with each other, and the social unities are the personification of the unity of these relationships. In the social unities we have the basic principles and ideals that make the various relationships possible. Since they supply the will with its proper objects, the theory of such categories is a theory of concrete freedom itself.

V

FROM THE STATE BASED ON NEED TO THE STATE

Hegel thinks that there are three such social categories for the modern world: the family, civil society, and the state. These categories have not always been around; they characterize the self-understanding of a particular form of culture, namely, modern European (and American) forms of life. The family is a social unity into which the individuals initially enter freely in terms of marriage ("its objective source lies in the free consent of the persons"⁶²) but in which new principles emerge that may not have been the object of any type of consent. The family is not an association, a union of individuals based simply on their freely joining the union. The children in the family have no choice in the matter, begin their existence as helpless beings, and the parents have the obligation to care for them.

Civil society, on the other hand, is such an association. The type of union that is present within it is based on the individual's pursuit of his own ends and by the belief on the part of each that such an arrangement is in his interests. It is a type of unity *coordination*, of each adjusting his behavior according to what the other does. The mores of this unity accordingly have to do with the various needs for coordination. Such an association is in part a market organization, but because of the need for coordination in such markets, a system of complete interdependence is produced. The values embodied in such a unity are thus not merely those of merely self-interested choices but also of respect for the differing pursuits of others and the necessity to compromise one's own pursuits and goals with the sometimes competing pursuits and goals of others. The coordinated liberty of civil society allows the moment of respect for individual liberty (in

the sense of personal choice, *Willkür*) to be expressed in the terms of a social category: "This universality as the state of being acknowledged is the moment which makes concrete, i.e., social the isolated and abstract needs and their ways and means of satisfactions."⁶³

The kind of unity found in the free associations of civil society would not be stable simply through the workings of market mechanisms. If the only glue that holds the civil society together were the belief on the part of each that such an arrangement best furthered her own interests, then there would always be a temptation on the part of each to try to twist the arrangements of civil society into some form that would be of particular advantage to her. Moreover, where great and undeserved disadvantages fall to individuals through bad luck, it will be difficult for them to have any identification with the social order and to share in the self-understandings that make civil society work. Such individuals will be logically unable to accept the normative arrangements of civil society as binding upon them, since their belief that they have a right to individual satisfaction of their own needs will contradict the prevailing order.⁶⁴

Civil society thus requires two additional organizational features. It requires a mechanism for providing adjustments in the workings of the market so as to maintain fairness in, for example, the balance of interests between producers and consumers.⁶⁵ This mechanism is what Hegel calls the "police," public authorities that we nowadays would call regulatory agencies. Second, civil society requires organizations that link the individual with civil society by uniting those people with common interests into groups that represent their interests. These are guilds and unions, what Hegel calls "corporations."

This kind of interdependence of each person with the others and the need for a well coordinated social unity gives rise to something like a kind of Lockean minimal state concerned with the protection of the abstract rights to life, liberty and property. Hegel calls this conception of the state the "state based on need" (the *Notstaat*, the state that comes into being to relieve the "emergencies" of civil society).⁶⁶ In the kind of market society found at the level of civil society, it would be necessary to construct at least a quasi-state apparatus complete with a system of law and administration in order to protect the orderly workings of the market and so on.⁶⁷ Civil society is a social unity based largely on the pursuit of self-interest. What gives the unity to this type of union is the belief on the part of most individuals that this arrangement is the best workable alternative for pursuing

his or her own self-interest. The state based on need explains the possibility of this type of unity (it is the result of considerations about what would be necessary for the securing of a basis for legitimate expectations and the like). Because the "state based on need" arises out of the needs for coordination, for the protection of basic abstract rights and to preserve the goods found in the association that makes up civil society, it must go beyond the Lockean minimal state. For example, it must provide an educated populace to maintain the work-force and to ensure that each individual has his or her self-respect protected.⁶⁸

Yet Hegel is not content with the "state based on need" as a complete explanation of the possibility of ethical life. More, the state proper, must be added. Probably no more worse things have been said about Hegel's theory than about his theory of the state. If nothing else, it might be thought that this reading of Hegel in terms of a doctrine of social categories would lead to a morally unacceptable theory of the relation of the individual to the state, where perhaps the state determines in some terribly authoritarian fashion the proper objects of the will. We have seen, though, that Hegel's doctrine is not one of fusion of individuals into some totalitarian whole but one of constructing categories of ethical life. This puts us in a better position to understand what is actually valuable in his theory of the state. We can see this by reflecting in a general way on the type of social unity that is the state and why Hegel thinks it is necessary to distinguish what he calls the *Notstaat*, the "state based on need" (what Hegel also calls the *Verstandesstaat*, the state as the "understanding" conceives it), from the state proper.

The rationale for his transition from the "state based on need" to the state proper may not be immediately apparent. What, after all, does the category of the state explain that has not already been explained in the category of civil society? Why then do we need yet a further category? One may indeed suspect (and many commentators have) a more sinister motivation for such a transition, viz., a desire for some all-encompassing organic nation-state with authoritarian (if not totalitarian) overtones. Some of Hegel's text certainly warrants such suspicion. For example, Hegel says of the state, "On the other hand, this final end has supreme right against the individual, whose supreme duty is to be a member of the state."⁶⁹ Those unfriendly to Hegel will be able to cite many other similar passages.

I have proposed that we see Hegel as rejecting both the Kantian doctrine of the freedom of the will as residing in the will's ability to

give itself its own rule and the Kantian identification of the respect for persons with the idea of respecting the choices of others. The rationale for this is that once you have made the latter identification, you will be compelled to see the state as the result of some kind of social contract or set of choices that individuals make. This, more than Hegel's view, has its sinister side: if the state is the result of a contract (and we think of contracts as bargains for mutual self-interest), then presumably people will want to include those in the contract that in some sense either provide some kind of benefit to them or are otherwise simply too dangerous to exclude. On that view, the state must become like a kind of club that excludes certain people from membership. This will leave the powerless, the handicapped—in short, those who provide neither benefit nor pose a threat—without protection. At best, one would end up with a state based on mutual protection, which is more or less what the *Notstaat* is.

The *Notstaat's* justification lies in its claim to universality. However, as an agency set up by individuals in society, it must of necessity be a particular organ, most likely an organ by which some one group can press its interests on to others who are too weak to resist. The contradiction that Hegel thinks impels the move from the doctrine of civil society with its version of the state—the “state based on need”—is the contradiction between the *Notstaat's* claim to universality and the fact that it can only be the organ of one group of interests (its particularity).⁷⁰

The transition is in part one from a social unity whose focus is *economic* to one whose focus is *political*. It moves from the conception of civil society as an association of people held together by the pursuit of the self-interest of each, with the *Notstaat* arising in order to maintain the orderliness necessary to such an arrangement, to the notion of a form of social unity in which a common good that is not simply the sum of various interests in society can be recognized. In practice, of course, economic and political spheres intermesh, but it is the conceptual distinction between the two that Hegel is making.⁷¹ The economic sphere is bonded together by market relationships, by the belief on the part of each that this arrangement furthers her own interests.

The political sphere is a different type of union. In it people are not merely means to an end but are something like fellow actors in a political drama. In the first place, our relation to others in an economic sense is contingent; their place could in theory be taken by machines, for there is no intrinsic reference to them, only to their products or capabilities for production. Second, our relation to others

in the economic sense is instrumental. In the economic sense we use each other as means, exploiting each other's productive and consumptive capabilities. However, our relations to others in a political sense are not contingent (others are needed for that kind of drama; they could not be so easily replaced by machines), and our encounters with others in the political sphere is not primarily based on our using them as a means. As we might say, it is part of the very idea of market-based economic relations that in them we use each other instrumentally, but it is a corruption of politics to do so. In the political sphere we form a community that is justified by more than the provision of mutual benefit or mutual protection (not that these are to be denigrated). What unites us in the political life of the state is not a kind of fusion, a submersion of individual identity into some organic whole, but a general commitment to a way of life based on rational, coherent principles.⁷²

The members of such a community find their identity with each other in a set of principles that are not mere expressions of political compromise or a kind of *modus vivendi* constructed out of the self-interest of various individuals. The commitment to principle gives people a larger sense of community, of having a noninstrumental relation to each other than is possible in an association united simply by compromises based on mutual self-interest.⁷³ It also gives them a basis for obligation that goes beyond mere mutual benefit or even a general commitment to some abstract principle of fairness (as if political obligation consisted only in the obligation to repay benefits not received as gifts). Political obligation is derivative from *belonging* to a community that treats one in a principled way. Just as our political rights come from our belonging to a certain community, our obligations also arise from such belonging. However, where the community does not live up to its own standards, the obligations lessen. If the state does not treat one in a principled way, one loses one's obligations. (As Hegel puts it, "Slaves, therefore, have no duties because they have no rights, and vice versa."⁷⁴)

Hegel stresses this point in a passage immediately following the allegedly sinister one earlier cited: "If the state is confused with civil society, and if its specific end is laid down as the security and protection of property and personal freedom, then the interest of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association; and it follows that membership of the state is something optional. But the state's relation to the individual is quite different from this."⁷⁵ What exactly is this relation? Hegel's answer—"Unification pure and simple

is the true content and aim of the individual, and the individual's destiny [*Bestimmung*] is the living of a universal life"⁷⁶—may be seen as just the kind of claim that Hegel's detractors say that he is making. His talk of "unification" as the goal of political life might seem to be imply that the *political union* of individuals should be taken as a kind of *fusion*, a reassertion of the type of unity proper perhaps to the family. If that reading of Hegel were true, then the consequences of Hegel's thought would be a justification of authoritarian suppression of different modes of life, a kind of philosophical justification of the worst aspects of the nation-state. However, there is no logical reason in his system that would compel him to do that. His major point is only that political union is different from economic union, not that it need be a fusion of some sort, and that political union explains something that the unity of civil society and the *Notstaat* do not.

What kind of union then is it, and what does it explain? Political union in the form of the state explains how it is possible that people can form a union that recognizes individual liberty, preserves a sense of shared identity, and is not reducible to a set of private interests. Hegel speaks in this regard of the state as having the unity of a single will.⁷⁷ The state, that is, must be thought of as a moral agent in its own right, with principles that have a priority over principles that might actually be held by individuals living in that state.⁷⁸ This does not imply any conception of the state as a totalitarian fusion of individuals; it simply asserts the independent moral agency of the state as a "subject" in its own right. For example, in a liberal democratic state (not that Hegel was actually arguing for such a state) the principles of procedural due process and justice take priority over any contrary principles that might be held by individuals in that state. A lynch mob or just a group of prejudiced citizens in the majority must subordinate their principles, however passionately and sincerely held, to the principles of procedural due process and justice.⁷⁹

Moreover, as a single subject, the state must embody a set of coherent principles; in this way, moral restrictions similar to those that apply to an individual's actions also apply to the state's outlook. This is not to say the same principles apply to the state as to individuals, only that the state as a moral agent has an obligation to base its decisions on a rational, defensible set of principles just as an individual with power over others has such an obligation. It must strive in its political workings—whether these be in the legislative, executive, or judicial branches—to render its set of ethical principles into rational and coherent form.

How is it possible that a state is a moral agent on its own? The idea of a constitution explains this possibility. The constitution of a society enables that society to function as a coherent whole in terms of a unity of principles, instead of functioning just as a makeshift hodge-podge of individuals locked in a struggle for dominion and mastery.⁸⁰ It forms a community united not by intensity of feeling or a comprehensive vision of life but rather by a set of ethical principles (what Hegel calls the "universal").⁸¹ As the locus of authority that is the "glue" of political union, a constitution creates the possibility of individuals' exercising political power over other individuals not through market relations but through relations of justified authority. The constitution both creates such relations and embodies them.

In the constitutional state the ethical principles that vouchsafe the individual's sense of his or her own dignity are given expression. Constitutional law is based, therefore, on the idea that the state must treat its members with respect, according to the principles of just political life.⁸² The constitution embodies the concrete ethical precepts of a specific way in which the moral world is articulated, and it gives them a focus.⁸³ The shared identity that is proper to the state is therefore not some form of nationalistic jingoism or totalitarian fusion. It is an identification with the shared set of constitutional principles.

The constitution is accepted as having normative force for the society for which it is the existence, the *Dasein* of authority. It embodies the ethos of a particular culture, the ways in which the abstract but nonetheless objective principles of Abstract Right gain a concrete embodiment. However these principles may be interpreted, they must find their place in the constitution of a country. More than just the shared set of constitutional principles, however, is necessary to express the unity of society as an ethical unity. There must also be some conception of a common good.

The passage on unification as the destiny of the individual may therefore be read as Hegel's way of arguing that it is in the state that we have a full sense of the common good and of the shared principles that make the community an ethical one and not just an association. It is also part of Hegel's theory that the constitution of a state rests on a deeper set of motivations of individuals, on a kind of character among its citizens.⁸⁴ The idea of the state as a moral agent explains how there can be a political as distinct from a social unity. Constitutionalism explains how such an ideal of the state as a moral agent is possible. This ideal of character explains how such a constitutional system is itself possible. Without a general commitment on the part

of individuals to the shared set of principles that make up constitutionalism, constitutionalism itself is not possible. It is in part by identifying with the constitutional order that individuals lead a "universal life."

Hegel's discussion of patriotism is an example of this.⁸⁵ If the traditional reading of Hegel as the exponent of fusion of the individual into the nation-state were true, then we would expect him to endorse obedience to authority as the essence of patriotism ("My country, right or wrong"). Instead, for him patriotism is the sentiment that arises in a political order that is true to its principles. If the state were an association, then patriotism would have no place. If the state does not live up to its principles, then patriotism would be deprived of its basis. Patriotism in the constitutional state is the virtue that comes with being a member of a just political community. We recognize others as sharing an identity with ourselves; in the acknowledgment of patriotism, the virtues inherent in *belonging* come to the forefront.

A non-Hegelian example might help to clarify this a bit. We might distinguish contract, partnership, and the pursuit of a common good. A contract would be a bargain between mutually self-interested individuals; it expresses "Abstract Right," the sense of liberal individuality. A partnership would be a joint undertaking between self-interested individuals with both the benefits and the burdens to be distributed among them. One would find both partnerships and contracts in civil society, with partnerships entering at the level of the corporation and perhaps also at the level of the "state based on need." A pursuit of the common good, however, is more than a contract or a partnership. In it, people connect with a unity higher than that constituted by mutual self-interest. That unity of people that gives content to their ideals of mutual acknowledgment would be the concrete form of the universal self-consciousness of which Hegel spoke in his conclusion to the dialectic of master and slave.

The common good is the systematic unity of the ideals of a society, the Spirit, *Geist*, of a given order. This Spirit constitutes the way in which people understand themselves, understand the proper relations between various kinds of people—in short, the way in which the given culture is conscious of itself. The freedom of the will consists in its willing the objects proper to it, and Hegel's theory of social unities is a categorial explanation of how it would be possible to have freedom in this sense. The principles found in the unions themselves constitute the concrete objects of volition that give the will its freedom. As products of practical mind itself, they are not alien to the will.

One wills the common good when one wills according to the ideals of these unions, and these unions can be understood only in terms of the ethos and mores of a given culture.

These unions give the individuals a complete sense of the "universal" life. One leads a good life when one acts freely. One acts freely when one wills according to the proper objects of the will. That is, one acts freely when one wills according to the goods of family, in accordance with the virtues of civil society, and with a commitment to the principles of a just constitutional order. Such a life is distinct from the life of *Willkür*, personal idiosyncratic choice. It is rather a life in which the impartial demands of reason—which nonetheless always take a determinate historical shape—are reconciled with the personal point of view.

There is some ambiguity in speaking of the common good as something "higher." It might be higher in the sense that its principles would always take priority over the principles that preceded it. Thus, the state would be a higher unity in this sense if in any conflicts with contrary claims arising out of "Abstract Right" or the "Family" or "Civil Society" the good of the state would take priority. This interpretation would certainly be the traditional way in which Hegel has been read and, it must be admitted, finds some support in the text. The other way to see the common good as higher would consist in taking it as offering new content for willing but not necessarily taking precedence over the previous principles. The previous rights and duties are preserved in the higher unity. This is one way of taking Hegel's idea of integration, *Aufhebung*, as it applies to his political philosophy. The higher unity integrates the principles found at the lower level and supplies new content on its own. The principles at the lower level acquire new sense by being integrated into the higher conception of the common good, but they do not vanish, nor do they necessarily lose in any conflicts with principles appropriate to the state. Hegel's idea that the constitutional principles take priority over lower level principles does not imply (nor is it meant to) that the good of the state takes priority over individual goods. The level of constitutional principle expresses the idea that the people of a state have a relation to it that is based on principles, for example, of political equality. For example, the constitution might forbid discrimination on the basis of religion, even though a given majority might find some religion silly or offensive. Such a priority of constitutional principle does not imply that the state has the right completely to prescribe to individuals how to live. Constitutional principles create a legitimate

political and social space for differing individual ideas of the good. Indeed, the constitutional principles vouchsafe a sphere of personal independence, guaranteeing the individual a realm in which his or her choices will be respected, even when those choices are at odds with those of the rest of the community. Hegel's point is that without such a constitutional union and the personal virtues attendant to it, the sphere of personal independence is itself adrift.⁸⁶

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Possibility of History

The concluding section of Hegel's theory of ethical life is taken up with a discussion of the philosophy of history. He expanded his notes on this into a series of lectures that he gave over the years. His own lecture notes and the notes taken by his students were compiled after his death by one of his prize students, Eduard Gans, and then later by his son, Karl Hegel. Under the title *The Philosophy of History*, they have become probably the most widely read and the most well known of Hegel's works. The popularity and impact of Hegel's philosophy of history no doubt had much to do with the brilliant execution that Hegel gave to his program, especially his succinct portrayals of the animating spirit of various periods and events and the striking quality of the prose, a feature regrettably absent in much of his other work.

His theses on the philosophy of history are taken by a great many people to be the core of the Hegelian philosophy and to express the essence of the Hegelian dialectic. After Hegel's death, it was his philosophy of history and not, for example, his *Science of Logic* or his philosophy of nature that caught the fancy of his students as an area of development.¹ Many commentators have made them into the core of all of Hegel's work, the touchstone by which interpretation of the rest of Hegel's corpus is to be made. This is somewhat ironic since Hegel never published them in his lifetime, and they form only a short section of his work on Objective Spirit.

The received interpretation of Hegel's philosophy of history goes something like this. Hegel believed that his philosophy proved that history followed certain dialectical laws of development and progressed from less developed to more developed stages. History's dialectic is propelled by the teleological effort of Spirit, *Geist*, to come to a full self-consciousness. Spirit does this by embodying itself in certain historically determinate forms and institutions that then engender contradictions within themselves. In order to overcome these contradictions, Spirit abolishes one phase of history and passes on to the next, creating a new set of institutions. Individuals and nations are only the unconscious means that Spirit uses to achieve its end of full self-development. Spirit struggles with itself in this fashion until it comes to full self-consciousness in the modern period. Each succeeding stage follows logically from the previous one, and the stages are arranged in the progression from less freedom to more freedom. The progression is, moreover, necessary. Overall, this can be taken as the grand design of history, the way in which God makes himself known.

Peculiarly enough, the received view is shared both by many of those who are otherwise favorable to Hegel's type of philosophy and by those for whom it is an example of all that can go wrong in Germanic academic philosophizing. On this received view, the fundamental question for Hegel in the philosophy of history is that of the overall purpose of history, its grand design. "Is there a pattern in history?" seems to be the kind of question to which Hegel is giving an affirmative answer. Such a view of the philosophy of history is now widely rejected as not properly philosophical. The philosophy of history, it is argued, is not best concerned with questions about the purpose of history or its grand design but with the modes of thought that historians use. The view of history as having a grand design may perhaps serve some religiously or ideologically inspired purpose, but it cannot be rationally defended. In fact, as the received view has it, Hegel's attempt at coming up with the grand design of history is evidence of the fundamentally misguided nature of Hegel's whole enterprise, however brilliantly he may have executed it.

The received view has some foundation in Hegel's texts. Nonetheless, I wish to suggest that the received view is at least partially mistaken about what Hegel is up to in his philosophy of history. I suggest that we take his basic concern as being not fundamentally with the grand design of the course of history, but rather with the question "How is history possible?" The point about the grand design

of history emerges as part of the answer to the more basic question of the possibility of history. In particular, it arises as part of what Hegel calls "philosophical history." I shall argue that in order to understand Hegel's program, we must distinguish between his actual philosophy of history—interpreted as the answer to the question concerning the possibility of history—and his philosophical history—which for him displays the grand design of history. Assuming that Hegel's basic question concerns the possibility of history, we must begin by asking a few others. Why would he think that there is a problem of possibility at all here? What is it that would seem to exclude the possibility of history that would make the problem philosophical in the first place? To answer this, we must look briefly at the terms in which Hegel frames his discussion of history.

First, there is what Hegel takes to be one of the crucial misunderstandings that affected historians from time to time. This is the myth that a historian can be simply a receptacle of historical data, passively recording what actually happened and what did not. Hegel thinks that the rest of his work has shown the folly of that idea. There is no preconceptual or nonconceptual given in knowledge, whether it be perceptual, scientific, or historical knowledge. Hence, the historian must view the material from a particular theoretical background. What will count as an important fact, or even as a fact at all, depends on the background assumptions of the historical researcher. (Hegel does not believe that this makes him a historical relativist vis-à-vis knowledge, since he believes that some background assumptions are better than others.²)

Second, Hegel makes distinctions among various forms of written history in terms of the relation of the writer's cognitive background to the events. This relation is one of the historian to the Spirit of a culture—the ideas, norms, values, and ideals in terms of which the culture understands itself and interprets itself to itself. Original history, for example, is the account of events by contemporaries, "whose Spirit they shared."³ In reflective history, on the other hand, the historian "comes to the task with his own Spirit, different from the Spirit of the content."⁴ Hegel drives this point home in his criticism of what he calls pragmatic history, that written for the benefit of the present, to teach a lesson. Almost everyone is acquainted with Santayana's dictum that he who will not learn from the past is doomed to repeat it. Hegel draws a quite different conclusion: "But what experience and history teach is this—that peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on doctrines drawn from it. Each period is involved in such peculiar circumstances, ex-

hibits a condition of things so strictly idiosyncratic, that its conduct must be regulated by considerations connected with itself, and itself alone."⁵ What undermines pragmatic history is the fact that the past was so different from the present, and this difference consists in the differing Spirits of the times.

Hegel also has a somewhat special understanding of what does and does not count as history. In Hegel's sense, to be historical, a period must *think* of itself in a certain way; it must have, that is, a type of self-consciousness. This has two aspects to it: (1) it must think of itself in a particular way, namely, in terms of the ways in which it embodies freedom; (2) it must construct particular types of narratives of its doings and happenings, namely, those concerning the way in which freedom is extended, amplified, or restricted in that period. Hegel's conception of history, then, applies to certain types of events occurring in a culture that the culture understands in a particular way. Both the type of event and the understanding of the event are necessary conditions for applying the term "historical" to them.⁶

For something to be a history in the requisite sense, the history must relate to the historian in a special way. It must be a history that is part of a narrative that leads to *our* position in the narrative. History in the relevant sense thus is always our history. The history of the predecessors of the Incas, for example, fails to meet this Hegelian criterion, since it is not part of the narrative that makes up the history of the European peoples (Hegel included the American peoples in this group).

Hegel concludes that genuine history is a history of states, since only in states are both conditions met.⁷ Now, this seems *prima facie* wrong. Few historians, lay or professional, would deny that it makes sense to talk of ancient human history long before the establishment of cities or states. Historians legitimately study and write, for example, about the form of settlements in North America shortly after the first inhabitants crossed the Bering straits. Histories have been written of the Germanic peoples long before there was even a "Germany." But Hegel does not mean that where there are no states, nothing has happened. In fact, he means quite the opposite.⁸ Much, he admits, transpired in those stateless periods. It is not that nothing happened among such peoples, or that there was no change in their lives or modes of social organization. It is just that the people of that time do not have a "history" in this special sense.

Why restrict the term "history" to this type of event? After all, one could do a history of changing family patterns in the aboriginal tribes of New Zealand and make no reference to the way in which

freedom is embodied in those institutions. Or one could do the history of an idea (say, the idea of the atom) without any reference to freedom. Yet Hegel notes that many histories are just like this, and he does not deny them the title "history."⁹ He thinks only that they are not "genuine" history. His distinctions reveal that he has a special idea of history in mind.

Taken in this special sense, the history of states does indeed present such problems of possibility. There are at least two such problems. The first problem concerns how it is possible for us to describe the events that happened in the past as they were, so that they can form a narrative. If we hypothetically describe them in terms of the Spirit of their times, we have failed to make them understandable to us. If we describe them in the terms of the Spirit of our times, we do not describe them as they were for the people living through them.

This problem of describing the Spirit of other times gives rise to the second problem of possibility: is it possible to give an account of history that is not merely causal but in some fashion logical? (Hegel sometimes calls this the problem of seeing if a design for history can be found, but this, for reasons I will show, should be taken to be secondary to his more basic question, which concerns the possibility of showing how history—as the narration of the embodiments of freedom—is possible.) We can certainly give chronologies of events, as we might do if we listed the kings and queens of England, along with the dates of their rule. We can also construct narratives of events that make no reference to anything like "logical connections" between the events, as when we tell of how the Thirty Years' War decimated the German population and left the German nation politically divided, or when we explain the reformation as the result of a political struggle. In all these cases we are claiming that some set of events caused a later set of conditions, not that they implied them in some logical fashion. Indeed, the whole notion of events' implying each other sounds like some kind of elementary category mistake.

Why should we worry at all about whether the narration of historical events has any logical connection? To see Hegel's worry, consider what he takes to be the alternative. Take the claim that there are certain laws of history that may be discovered. For the sake of anachronism, consider the Marxist claim that when the forces of production come into contradictory conflict with the existing relations of production, a revolutionary situation is formed. In its Stalinist interpretation, this is taken to express a historical law. Just as the acorn will under the proper conditions develop into an oak, a society that

is structured around a certain mode of production will inevitably develop certain contradictions within it between the forces and relations of production, and it will inevitably be transformed in revolution.

What worries Hegel about such claims is what he sees as the crucial disanalogy between the acorn and human history: the latter concerns the free actions of individuals.¹⁰ History cannot be simply a procession of events unfolding according to developmental laws, as the growing of oak trees is. Such a view denies what Hegel thinks that he has shown both in his *Science of Logic* and in more detail in his philosophical psychology and theory of the ethical life. Views that offer laws of history assume that historical processes are to be explained in the terms of the "Doctrine of Essence": they look for substructural elements to explain the superstructural aspects of appearance. Historical progressions, however, involve human action, and the categories of the "Doctrine of Essence" are inadequate to explain action. The Stalinist-Marxist view, for example, posits a substructure (the economic organization of society and the resulting contradictions in it) that explains the superstructural aspects of historical progression. Hegel tries to show in the *Science of Logic* that mind need not be conceived in such epiphenomenal terms. Mind (and action) may be comprehended in terms of the logic of conceptuality, of meaning. Actions have a meaning to them, and where there are meanings, there can be logical relations between them. But—back to the original question—is it possible to find any such logical connections in the meanings found in historical narratives?

Hegel's understanding of the nature of persons plays an essential role here. A person is an entity with a self, that is, an entity capable of self-consciousness. Hegel explains the possibility of this self-consciousness in the *Science of Logic* in terms of the categories of "the Concept"—more generally, we might say, in terms of the categories of meaning. Minds exist insofar as there are entities capable of taking up a relation to the world that is semantical and not just causal in character. The possibility of this kind of relationship of meaning is explained in the "Doctrine of the Concept" by the ideas of positing and self-positing. Mind is that which posits things as explanations and posits itself as that which does the positing. To the extent, then, that people are self-conscious, they are free. As self-determination, the positing of the self by itself constitutes the essence of freedom.

This freedom must be structured in terms of social categories. Hegel's argument for this is, again, that it is due to the nature of practical syllogisms as developed in the *Science of Logic*. For practical

sylogisms to work, there must be some objective way of determining what the good is, but this is possible only in a practically structured social and political world. We understand the good in terms of types of people fulfilling certain types of roles and functions within our culture. The force of a practical syllogism depends therefore on determinate social and cultural situations. Such an understanding of the goods and roles of a culture is explained by the *Spirit* of that culture. This Spirit consists of the basic ideas, norms, values, and ideals in terms of which the culture understands itself and interprets itself to itself. The Spirit of a culture forms its self-consciousness, its shared self-understandings. Therefore, if action in general is to be possible, there must be a Spirit, a set of shared self-understandings in terms of which people understand the goods of action. Social *categories* express the basic form that the particular practical world assumes (in Hegel's manner of speaking, the social categories express the basic determinate forms of Spirit).

The Spirit of a culture forms the ways in which mind posits itself. Hegel refers to this generally as a form of "Objective Spirit," a set of institutions and cultural forms that structure the understanding of the good for a determinate historical group. One of Hegel's central theses is that the most important principle a culture may develop is that of freedom. We may evaluate the rationality of the institutions of a culture individually and collectively in terms of the way they embody freedom. In one form of Spirit institutions may clash because of incompatible ideals embodied in each of them. For example, Hegel argued that the principles of chivalry and valor in feudalism led to unacceptable results because they could only be expressions of loyalty to private individuals and not to a greater good.¹¹

If we think of Spirit in the abstract as that form which freedom takes in a particular time and culture, we can therefore compare the particular Spirits in terms of how well they embody freedom. This will be in part a logical analysis of these particular Spirits, since it will concern itself with questions such as how internally consistent those Spirits are. It will also concern itself with fundamental interpretations of that culture's Spirit. It will finally concern itself with whether one form of Spirit is more rational than another. How can this be done?

Hegel deploys the notion of rationality that undergirded the dialectic of the *Science of Logic* to provide him with a means of answering this question. Each category of the *Science of Logic* is a solution to the contradictions and incoherencies of previous sets of categories. Seen historically, rationality is not something in the abstract but is always

an answer to a particular set of problems at a time, not to all sets of problems at all times. What counts as a rational solution depends on the context. Hegel's key conceptions here are those of the *rational superiority* of one set of solutions vis à vis others, with *rational optimality* serving as the limiting case of such rational superiority. Φ is rationally superior to Θ if (a) Φ resolves problems that appear for Θ in the terms of Θ ; and (b) Θ cannot on its own terms resolve these problems. It does not follow that Φ is rationally superior to all alternatives. New problems may emerge in the terms of Φ , which some later position will resolve more satisfactorily. This is as true of theoretical as it is of practical rationality. Rational optimality would be the limiting case of a set of solutions that are superior to all other solutions; a rationally optimal solution cannot logically have any rationally superior alternatives. Hegel believes, for example, that the categories articulated in the *Science of Logic* were rationally optimal in this sense.

It is essential, Hegel thinks, to distinguish between the rationality of individual action and the rationality of the Spirit that gives shape to that action. Individual rational action proceeds in terms of the practical syllogism, which takes its conceptions of the good from the prevailing Spirit of the times. Individual action may thus be more or less rational depending on how it fulfills the individuals' needs, how well it corresponds to the individual's conception of the good, and so on. It is possible for an individual to act rationally on the basis of the Spirit of his culture, but the Spirit itself may be either irrational or may be less rational than some alternative.

This Spirit may, for example, itself have certain practical incoherencies within it.¹² A practical incoherence within a set of ideals exists, first, when those ideals fail to be actualized because they contradict the social conditions in which they are trying to be actualized. The ideals that formed the basis of Charlemagne's empire were (among others) examples of this. Hegel notes that although Charlemagne produced a great "constitution" for his Frankish empire, there was no basis in social life for it. It was held in existence only by the force of Charlemagne's personality and political savvy, and vanished with him.¹³

Second, ideals may fail to be actualized because when people act on the basis of those ideals, they produce something quite contrary to what they intend. The conditions for applying the ideals are such that the ideals cannot be put into practice. People acting on the basis of those ideals will produce situations in which it is impossible to actualize those ideals. Hegel criticized the French revolution as having

the second type of practical incoherence; the ideals of absolute freedom when put into practice in the conditions of revolutionary France resulted not in a situation of equal liberty for all but in a reign of terror and the reestablishment of despotism.

To claim that one form of Spirit is more rational than another is to claim that the problems that emerge in one Spirit are rationally resolved in another form. Hegel holds this indeed to be true, for example, in the comparison between the Roman and the modern European Spirit. Looking back, we can see our solutions as more rational than the Roman solutions, since we can provide answers to problems that arose within the Roman context that the Romans themselves could not resolve in the terms available to them. The relative rationality of forms of Spirit is thus similar to the relative rationality of various stages in the dialectic of the *Science of Logic*. Each stage answers the internal problems of an earlier stage. However, whereas the *Science of Logic* is an atemporal, logical development of categories succeeding each other in this fashion, the succession of forms of Spirit is a historical and temporal one. Is it also a logical succession, analogous to the procession of categories in the *Science of Logic*? Hegel's answer, he thinks, follows from his more general answer to the question of the possibility of history.

How then is history possible? First, history, understood both as the events that happened and as the account of those events, is possible only if people construct narratives about those events. Unless those events are seen in a certain light, there can be no history. Narratives link the events together to form a story. Narrative is more than just a way of linking events together; it is also a particular way of seeing the world, a form of consciousness. Second, people can construct narratives only if they are capable of free action, the intentional carrying out of a purpose. We link our actions together so they form a story. Without the capacity to intentionally direct our actions and our lives, we could tell no stories about them. We might have a causal account of our lives but no narrative account (in the latter case, we would have only a succession of events, not a *story* about them). For Hegel, we live in narrative form when we understand the events of our life as linked in some kind of "dramatic" fashion. By linking our separate actions together in a narrative form, we give a shape to our lives that endows them with a meaning.

Yet what is it that makes this kind of narrative consciousness of our lives and our collective past itself possible? It is the ability to evaluate our past, both our own personal past and our collective past,

in terms of its rationality. History is possible because we are capable of understanding the past in terms of its relative rationality. If the past were disconnected from us, or connected only causally with us, we would not have a history. We would have, to be sure, explanations of why things are the way they are or varying accounts of the past, but these would not constitute a history. We could, for example, give accounts of the origin of the planets in the universe, which (for obvious reasons) would be linked to our existence. Although such accounts tell us about important causal links to our present state, they are not part of the historian's concern. History is made up of only those past events and periods that we can understand as rational solutions to problems or at least as being responsible for the settings in terms of which we either have problems to be resolved or problems that we believe we have resolved. Without this element of rational evaluation and without the idea of relative rationality, we would be without history. Those people who for Hegel are without a history are without it precisely because they had no conception of relative rationality. Hegel does not deny that they could have very complex world views, nor even they could make progress in, for example, technological areas. However, without the conception of progress—without, that is, the idea that a later set of conceptions and conditions is a rational solution to earlier problems—they could have no history. This suggests to Hegel that one could indeed show that history is not merely a temporal but also a logical succession of forms of Spirit. Hegel postulates that the connecting thread in history is the problem of how people understood the nature and value of freedom and the way in which that understanding takes concrete shape in the culture. Freedom and rationality are for Hegel intimately connected; free action is possible, after all, only because people are capable of forming practical syllogisms. How people understand themselves to be free and how they value that freedom is structured by the shared self-understandings in their culture, its Spirit. To the extent that there are different sets of self-understandings at different times, it makes sense to talk of different understandings of this freedom. In this way, Hegel thinks that he avoids any problem of incommensurability among the various historical periods. Each period tries to give shape to the same thing: freedom. Each period may be seen, that is, as an *interpretation* of freedom and its requirements. These different understandings of freedom can be ranked according to their adequacy in two ways: (1) in terms of relative rationality: one understanding can be more rational than another because it resolves problems that the other can pose but

not answer; (2) it can be measured by how well it captures the true understanding of freedom. These are relative and absolute criteria for assessing historical periods. Hegel held that the understanding of history involves both of these elements, although the latter becomes possible only in the present time, after we have developed (so he thinks) an adequate conception of freedom. For him, that proves the possibility of such ranking.

Hegel thus concludes that we can rank various abstract conceptions of freedom in terms of their relative rationality vis à vis each other, and all of them in terms of the one optimally rational solution. But is this in fact the way history actually proceeded? Suppose that we had three such conceptions (A, B, and C), and it is agreed: that B is superior to A; C is superior to B; and C corresponds to the adequate conception of freedom. Now, says Hegel, if we look at the facts of history dispassionately, we see that in fact history is so structured. In his famous shorthand for the progression that he sees in history, Hegel claims that "The East knew and to the present day knows only that one is free; the Greek and Roman world, that some are free; the German world knows that all are free."¹⁴ That history exhibits such a progression, Hegel thinks, is undeniable once one has understood some central categories.

Such an exhibition of the stages of history as progressing from less to greater rationality constitutes what Hegel calls "philosophical history." Philosophical history treats each period—each shape that Spirit takes—as if it were a theory of freedom to be evaluated along with other such "theories." Central to Hegel's conception of philosophical history is the idea of a redescription of historical events in terms of some set of principles that would *justify* that set of events. It is not a claim that this was the intention on the part of any of the actors, nor is it the claim that this was the cause of the events. Rather, it attempts to show how in retrospect a set of events *could* be justified, even if that was not part of the justification at the time for those events. In philosophical history, a war, for example, may be later justified because it led to independence or freedom or equality. What is meant by that is not that this formed the motivations of those fighting the war. Some may have fought it out of sense of adventure, some for profit, some for a whole variety of other reasons. When we say that the war was justified because it led to, for example, freedom, we are saying that only by interpreting the outcome in terms of such a principle could we possibly justify the carnage and gruesomeness that occurred. A war that was fought even out of the most base motives

could turn out to be justified in this sense. Suppose, just to make the example clear, that a kind of Marxist reading of the American Civil War is correct; that is, that the cause of the war was the desire on the part of northern capitalists to dominate and exploit the South and that the abolition of slavery (which capitalism is wont to do anyway, preferring wage slavery to the real thing) was only a pretext. Nonetheless, a Hegelian non-Marxist might *justify* the war as having established the principle of equality between the races. He or she would do so by arguing that acceptance of this principle was the result of the war and that only such a principle could justify the tremendous loss of life and destruction that came about in the American Civil War.

Hegel had a kind of grand philosophical history, unfolded in terms of the development of conceptions of freedom. The history of the world, he says, is a vast "slaughter bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states and the virtue of individuals have been sacrificed."¹⁵ Only such a development and establishment of conceptions of freedom and the equality of freedom, so Hegel argues, could possibly justify history's "vast slaughter bench." As is well known, Hegel thinks that a dispassionate reading of history would show that in fact the course of history did lead to the establishment of the equality of freedom, thereby showing history to have been justified. However, the philosophy of history, so Hegel thinks, needs to pose a further question: is this progression from worse to better conceptions of freedom necessary? Or is it just a happy fact that could have been otherwise? Hegel puts this as a question of possibility: could it even be *possible* that this progression from better to worse is necessary, especially given that human freedom seems to rule out such a necessary progression?

Hegel, as is well known, denies that the progression from worse to better is just a coincidence, and his reasoning seems to be the following. Because people are free and are conscious of this freedom, there is a potentiality for development in history from worse to better conceptions of freedom. This is, however, only a potentiality. Since the potentiality for development from less rational to more rational is there, it will be actualized, provided the conditions are right. Is it only a happy fact that the right conditions for its actualization occurred? Is there any necessity that the correct conditions will occur? Hegel invokes the conception of teleology defended in the *Science of Logic* to argue that in fact they will. In teleological systems, on Hegel's view, the specific end implies the specific means for its realization,

and in the case of a complete teleological system also implies its own realization. The goal of history is the development of rational freedom. This goal elicits certain conditions in which individuals' choices lead to situations that set up the possibility of one Spirit rationally succeeding another one, even if that was not intended by the individuals themselves.

From the standpoint of an individual, the historical process may appear random or even to be heading for decline (as it would no doubt appear, for example, to the observers of the sack of Rome by the wandering Germanic tribes). This is, however, only mere appearance (*Schein*); in actuality, even the terrible events surrounding the sacking of Rome served the larger goal of enabling individuals to make choices that led to more rational solutions, although those solutions were never intended by the individuals. Individuals make their choices on the basis of what is in their interest ("interest" for Hegel is far more inclusive than just self-interest). The teleological goal of history, however, elicits just those conditions that provoke individuals acting on their own interests to act in the service of some larger goal. This hidden directing of a process by a goal is called by Hegel the "cunning of reason" (*List der Vernunft*—the term occurs first in the *Science of Logic* to describe teleological systems in general and later in the philosophy of history to describe the specific teleology of history). What appears as perhaps an undirected process actually serves some rational goal. In Hegel's eyes this demonstration of the teleology of history constitutes part of the core of the philosophy of history.

Hegel's claim seems to come down to something like the following. The possibility of history rests on the human consciousness of freedom. History presents a development of the ideal of rational freedom. He then postulates that this is not accidental, but the result of a teleology of history eliciting the proper conditions to produce this progression. The investigation of the possibility of history thus leads to us to the idea of a grand design of history. Although this is not the primary aim of the philosophy of history, this conclusion is nonetheless its result. Hegel claims, therefore, to have demonstrated the necessity of development in history from less to more rational stages and to have disclosed the grand design of history.

However, these conclusions depend on his specific idea of teleology. (Indeed, Hegel seems to note as much when he says that he will not prove this in his lectures on the philosophy of history, having already done so elsewhere.¹⁶) We have already commented (in Chapter Five) about the empirical vacuity of Hegel's conception of the specific

nature of a process being implied by the goal for which that process is reaching. This seems especially to be the case in the philosophy of history. How can Hegel claim to have actually discerned such a goal? Once again, we have not so much the demonstration of the explanatory power of a teleological goal as we have the extrapolation of the goal from the process. One discerns a pattern in a process—it began in one state, Φ , and ended up in another state, Θ —and then postulates that the process took the form it did because the process was somehow aiming at ending up in the state, Θ . But Hegel has not demonstrated that history actually *aims* at the state in which “all are free.” He has at best shown that the pattern of history as he has sketched it is at least consistent with such a teleological process, if such a process is there. This would be true even if one accepted Hegel’s account of teleological systems. One would unfortunately still have no argument that it *in fact* had been aiming at such a goal, except only to note that such a “fact” would be consistent with the form the process so far had taken.

But if we reject Hegel’s conception of teleology, what is left of his conception of the philosophy of history? We should distinguish between Hegel’s conceptions of the philosophy of history, philosophical history in general, and his own philosophical history. Hegel’s own philosophical history is part of his philosophy of history, but it is not the whole of it. His notion of reading history in terms of the relative rationality of its stages is logically independent of his idea of the teleology of history. Decoupled from its teleological overlay, philosophical history has two parts. First, it is the reading of history in terms of how certain conditions frame the rationality of problems and how some stages may be seen as relatively more rational than other stages. Certain historical facts are redescribed in the terms of philosophical history when they are seen as being better or worse answers to problems posed by earlier modes of thought and action. Much contemporary history of science meets part of the criteria for being a philosophical history in this sense. Second, it tries to offer an interpretation of history in terms of certain principles that would justify that course of history, independently of claims about whether this was or was not part of the intentions of the actors or one of the relevant causes of the historical events. Philosophical history is not a replacement for the history of the historians but an alternative way of perceiving history and even of doing history. Its value may be debated independently of one’s assessment of Hegel’s overall teleology of history.

However, there does not seem to be any reason to restrict it to the history of evolving conceptions of freedom, as Hegel thinks we must do. This returns us, of course, to the problems of incommensurability that Hegel thinks he has avoided. Nor is there any reason to restrict philosophical history to our history. Why could there not be a philosophical history of, for example, the Inca idea of freedom or moral obligation or idea of duty? Finally, there is certainly no *a priori* reason to suppose that philosophical history must always demonstrate that progress has occurred. It is consistent with this idea of philosophical history to say that things have become progressively less rational over time or that no principle could justify some particular piece of carnage. But if Hegel were alive today, perhaps he would not be unhappy with that conclusion at all.

CONCLUSION

Hegelianism and Historicism

Hegel's theory has been interpreted as an explanation of the possibility of certain categories. For Hegel the problems of philosophy are not to be resolved by some form of analysis (although that is indispensable to the setting of the problem—and something to which Hegel often does not pay close enough attention); nor are they to be resolved by a phenomenological description of consciousness, however refined a methodology that description may use. Philosophical problems are not to be resolved, so to speak, by paying closer attention to them, to the concepts or structures in question—either by attending to their logical form, their use in ordinary language or their appearance in transcendental consciousness. To the extent that they admit of any resolution, they must be treated as problems of explanation. Hegel perhaps undervalues analysis, and many of his “problems of possibility” (such as those involving teleological explanations) could certainly use a more careful analysis of the terms in question. Nonetheless, Hegel's fundamental goal is not that of providing an analysis of the concepts in question; it is to provide a unitary system of explanations of the major categories of classical philosophy and to introduce as categories some concepts not previously treated as such (such as the social categories). Overall, it is to develop specific defensible conceptions of the basic categories of classical philosophy in terms of something he calls dialectic.

There is an obvious objection to the main lines of this interpretation of Hegelian theory. This type of reading of the Hegelian theory,

so it could be argued, itself undervalues certain key aspects of Hegel's thought. Hegel himself, for example, does not speak of his theory as merely providing one set of explanations among many possible ones but of displaying the *necessary* developments of "the Concept." Likewise, he does not think of his own theory as being one explanation among many but of being *the* necessary explanation of the categories in question. How does one square this reading of Hegel with these apparent facts about how Hegel intends his work to be taken?

One answer is that there are elements of Hegel's theory that are detachable in the sense that they may be excised without affecting the rest of the claims, and they may be considered independently of each other. One can identify two such elements, I think, in Hegel's theory that have been widely acknowledged by scholars of Hegel. One is the Kantian element of the theory. Hegel understands his own theory as the successor to those theories first established by Kant and then later developed and continued by Schelling and Fichte, and he also understands himself to be correcting what he takes to be significant mistakes in the earlier theories (such as what he considers to be the indefensible subjectivism of these theories).

Hegel sees his theory as the successor to the Kantian science of reason. Just as Kant thought he had established in a scientific manner the necessity of his twelve categories as requirements for the possibility of experience and knowledge, Hegel thinks that he has through rigorous dialectical argument established the necessity of his categories. Let us call this element the Kantian element of Hegel's theory; it is that part that stresses the necessity of the various dialectical transitions and the uniqueness of the various solutions thereby obtained.

The other element is Hegel's understanding of philosophy as a kind of cultural enterprise, a kind of rational investigation of the key categories of a given culture. His brilliance in interpreting works of philosophy as expressions of their culture and times is one of the things that even his strongest detractors often praise. Let us call this element the interpretivist element of Hegel's theory; it is this part of his theory that stresses the historical element in all understanding and the relativity of that understanding to its surrounding intellectual and cultural environment.

It is not clear that these two enterprises are as closely linked as Hegel perhaps understands them to be. Yet it seems to be clear that he thinks of them as closely, if not essentially, related. The issue for Hegel is no doubt to see how the development of ideas in history

(along with their culturally bound nature) could be compatible with the necessitarian aspects of the idealist program. His solution is to see the development in history of these ideas as having themselves a necessitarian character. Although the ideas of one period are relative to that period, they can be seen to lead to the ideas of a succeeding period with something like logical necessity, since each succeeding period turns out to be more rational than the period before. Kantianism and cultural relativity would be conjointly possible if the dialectic applied not merely to the argumentative establishment of the categories but also to the temporal development of these categories.

In this light, Hegel's move into the philosophy of history is something brought about by the kind of understanding that he has of his own program. His philosophy of history, so to speak, is necessary to answer a kind of problem of possibility that is at the heart of his own enterprise—indeed, at the heart of German idealism in general. But our question is different: is the philosophy of history a detachable element of his theory? Or is the Kantian strain a detachable element of his theory? Or, even if one could detach them, would one then lose the really novel and interesting aspects of German idealism? (One might have a more plausible, more defensible, but essentially less interesting and challenging form of philosophy.)

The interpretation of Hegel's theory as the explanation of possibility sees the interpretivist and the Kantian elements as detachable but nonetheless integral components of Hegel's overall vision. Having an overall vision, however, is not the same thing as having a completely integrated overall vision. However important both elements are to understanding *Hegel's* vision, both need not be necessary to understanding a *Hegelian* theory. Hegelian philosophy as the explanation of possibility is certainly open to the interpretivist element of Hegel's theory; we need not deny that our problems of possibility will depend on the intellectual climate of the times. Nor need one deny the Kantian element in Hegel's theory; one simply need not give it the importance that Hegel himself attaches to it. The Kantian element would indeed be plausible if Hegel has shown or could show that his proposals are the only ones possible. However, he does not do that nor is it all clear how he even could do that.

The importance that Hegel gives to the Kantian element seems to rest on Hegel's belief that only with such an element is it possible to have an adequate conception of reason and its requirements. Without the Kantian element, we run the danger (self-evident to him) of "subjectivism," the danger to which Hegel thinks Kant himself had

succumbed. Hegel does not apparently see the possibility that in the interpretivist element of his theory, he has created a non-Kantian alternative. Indeed, Hegel's own theory can be read as constructing the rudiments of a theory in which we need not think of the requirements of reason as something that can be satisfied only if they are ahistorical requirements. The admission of culturally bound standards need not require a kind of self-defeating relativism.

Hegel does not accept, as Kant did, that Newtonian physics was for all practical purposes within its own domain the last word in physics. (Hegel criticized many of the Newtonian ideas, at least as they had been received in the academic climate in which he operated.¹ He instead defended many Keplerian conceptions against the Newtonian system). Nonetheless, like Kant, Hegel believes that the function of philosophy is in part to validate these conceptions. Kant's own faith in Newton was soon to be undone by history. Not only are neither Newton's nor Kepler's categories the only "rational" ones, they are in fact deficient in many ways, as two hundred years later relativity theory was to show. Where does that leave Hegel?

His ethics could have given him the lineaments of an understanding of the way out of the Kantian dilemma. In his critique of "Morality" Hegel argues against Kant that an ahistorical conception of reason would not give us anything except very general statements, such as "Do one's duty." Hegel sees that relativizing the truth of ethical judgments did not entail a kind of strong relativism. The strong relativist claims that there are no true judgments of better or worse in ethics. For Hegel, there are true judgments of better and worse in a culture, but that does not mean that what is true for that culture is true for all cultures. For example, there are better and worse judgments about what is necessary to maintain individualism in western culture, but this does not mean that western-style individualism is itself "true" for all cultures. Different ideas—about the nature and extent of certain concrete rights, such as the right to vote—can admit of better or worse conceptions, but this always presupposes a set of practices, institutions, and ideals to be found within the culture.

Hegel's strictures in ethics should be extended to his whole theory. If the principles of Kantian morality turn out to be only the principles of a particular age, and the categories of Kantian metaphysics only the categories of Newtonian science, then why not go the whole way and support the relativization of all such categories? Hegel was not particularly well suited in his own time to raise the question in this way. Kantian metaphysics was still recent, and the

great faith in Newton and Euclid that informed Kantian theory was not yet shaken. But the possibilities for an extension of the interpretivist element of Hegel's theory are there, however unsuited Hegel was to see them clearly.

Hegel's criticism of other philosophies illustrates this. He sees the inadequacy of previous philosophies as explanatory inadequacy and the superiority of his theory as explanatory superiority. His claim is that his theory resolves problems that the other theories by their own standards could not resolve. His theory does not answer problems that they did not have (it was not the answer to questions that they did not ask); it resolves the problems internal to them. His theory thus claims a rational superiority over the competing theories (which included all theories in the history of philosophy).

Hegel sharply differs with Kant on the nature of the history of philosophy. The Kantian-critical view of the history of philosophy sees it as a series of deeply embedded mistakes (for example, failure to appreciate the limits of pure reason). The Hegelian view sees it as a series of alternative theories, some of which could claim an explanatory superiority over others. The hitch in Hegel's view lies in his belief not merely that his theory is rationally superior to those of his predecessors (that can always be disputed) but that it also has a legitimate claim to absolute knowledge, a kind of final superiority.

In Hegel's theory, there is a distinction operative between rational superiority and rational optimality (the terms are not Hegel's). Rational *superiority* is relative to other theories; a theory, B, may be rationally superior to another theory, A, but yet another theory, C, may be rationally superior to B, and so on.² Rational *optimality* would be a kind of end-state superiority; it would mean "superior to all other possible theories"—or in Kantian terms, "acceptable to all rational beings." Put more prosaically, rational superiority means "better than . . ."; rational optimality means "best."

In Kant's eyes, Newtonian physics, Euclidian geometry and his own transcendental philosophy are all rationally optimal theories. Hegel himself certainly had the goals of not merely rational superiority but also rational optimality for his theory. However, only if one accepts the Kantian idea that rational optimality is necessary to avoid skepticism need one accept the idea (also Hegel's) that both rational superiority and rational optimality are in an adequately worked-out theory undetachable. If one does not accept the Kantian ideal of rational optimality, then one will not have a reason for accepting this view of Hegel's philosophy. It is the interpretivist element in his theory

that aims at rational superiority; it is the Kantian element that aims at rational optimality.

Rational optimality would be possible if there were some criteria of assessing theories independently of their context, of being able to make the claim that the theory resolves all possible problems. Hegel thinks this to be the case particularly with his *Science of Logic*. Hegel's case might be put thus: (1) if each stage of the dialectic could be shown to engender a contradiction (the paradigm sin against full rationality), and (2) if the succeeding stage could be shown to be necessary to avoid the contradiction, and (3) if the final stage of explanation could be shown to engender no possible further contradictions, then (4) the goal of rational optimality would be plausible.

I have argued that none of these conditions are met. First, not all stages in the dialectic involve contradictions; some merely involve at best incoherencies, and others are simply deficient in the sense that a fuller explanation is possible, although not required. (As I note in the first chapter, Hegel seems to accept the idea that the explanation that leads to a richer rather than an impoverished view of the world is the preferred one, although there does not seem to be much argument in his work for that premise.³)

Second, Hegel severely underplays the possibility that at each stage other alternative explanations are possible. This is true if at some stages there is no contradiction (in which case one could without any strict violation of rationality stay at that stage), and it is true even if there is a contradiction, but Hegel's own solution is not the only possible one. This severely undermines the claim of the necessity of each particular transition and thus also undermines the defensibility of the Kantian element in Hegel's theory.

Third, the final stage of the theory—the absolute Idea—can also make no claim to being the resolution of all possible dilemmas, particularly if the claim about the necessity of the earlier transitions is undermined. It represents the ideal of rational optimality—at best, a regulative but not a constitutive ideal. (It is not surprising that one of the earliest criticisms of his philosophy by one of his followers was that the absolute Idea did not represent a final stage but that new contradictions emerged. Cieszkowski, for instance, held that a new contradiction between rational thought, represented by the Hegelian system, and the irrational world required a new direction in theory.⁴ The young Marx also held a similar view, finally settling on the proletariat as the agent of change that would bring about the union of philosophy and the world.)

If one accepted only the interpretivist element in Hegel's theory, then one would be left with the reading of Hegel that transmutes him into a kind of forerunner of more contemporary hermeneutical theorists. This has been a common aim of many interpreters of Hegel since people like Wilhelm Dilthey and Benedetto Croce tried to pry the "rationalistic" element of Hegel's thought away from its more "historicist" element. Indeed, this way of reading Hegel might seem to be the only way to read him if one rejects the Kantian element in his philosophy. But does the rejection of the claim to absolute knowledge in Hegel's theory leave only the historicist Hegel as a viable alternative?

The purely historicist reading of Hegel severely underplays the explanatory goals of his philosophy, one of the legacies of his Kantian heritage. It would ignore what is genuinely Hegelian in the theory, viz., its union of interpretive and explanatory aims. Hegel's theory is interpretive in its being a theory of categories. Hegelian theory does not need to posit entities to explain the possibility of things (it is not, as was said earlier, a metaphysical theory). Instead, it posits general basic conceptions, categories, which are used to interpret the experience and the world of the subject using them. But it is not merely a hermeneutic of experience and the world; the categories are justified by their being explanations of how some domain of life, experience, or knowledge is possible. The Kantian element in Hegel's theory may be detachable without the theory's losing completely its Kantian heritage. One can keep the dialectic, many of Hegel's central claims, and still reject the necessitarian and metaphysical elements of the theory.

This also helps to preserve a general canon for interpreting a philosopher such as Hegel. Too much remaking of Hegel might make Hegel into a more contemporary philosopher but would sufficiently detach him from his historical context so that the interesting historical connections—in Hegel's case, to Marx and Kierkegaard, among others—would no longer be intelligible.⁵ The interpretation of Hegel's theory as the explanation of possibility avoids this difficulty. Marx himself may be profitably interpreted along the same lines.⁶ Among the questions that Marx asks, for example, in *Capital* is how are profits possible, given that mere exchange of goods does not produce any added value? His strategy is Hegelian: he begins with a simple category—the commodity—and out of certain alleged contradictions and incoherencies constructs the other basic categories of capitalism. Like Hegel, Marx was also under the sway of the Kantian paradigm (the subtitle of *Capital* is "Critique of Political Economy"). He believed that

his explanation of how profits are possible (the laborer must produce more surplus value than he gets back) is in fact the only reasonable explanation, and that his theory is not simply better (rationally superior) but "scientific," the best (rationally optimal). Like Hegel, he is subject at least to the criticism that he has not demonstrated that his solutions are unique (and, of course many hold that his solutions are not even rationally superior). Like Hegel, Marx seemed to think that an explanation of the possibility of something that was rationally superior to other explanations was equivalent to the demonstration of the unique conditions of possibility of that thing. We may take this as an example of the claim that interpreting Hegel's theory as an explanation of the possibility of categories does not detach it from the interesting historical consequences that it had.

This interpretation allows us to retain much that is of interest in Hegel's program without believing that we have to accept either the whole of Hegel's philosophy or none at all. We do not need to accept the idea that the Hegelian theory rests on a kind of fundamental "vision" that is essential to it, and that whatever implausibility there is in this vision extends to the plausibility of the Hegelian program itself.⁷ Instead, we may see Hegel as a philosopher who attempts to answer a variety of questions in a fairly unified way and who leaves us with an alternative view of the role of philosophy. Philosophy is a historical enterprise with progress within it but in which all past philosophies remain contemporary. It has a subject matter: the explanation of possibility. It has competing methods of explanation within it: categorial, metaphysical, analytical, mixtures of all these, and so on. Interpreted as such, Hegel can rejoin the mainstream of philosophers, offering one among many competing explanations of the perennial problems of philosophy and offering a style of philosophy that may be further continued without the excesses to which Hegel himself often succumbs.

Notes

Citations will be given in the following way. The German text for Hegel's *Science of Logic* on which I rely is G. W. F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1971). This will be cited as *WdL*, with the volume number being given as either I or II. This edition is widely used and widely available. The pagination for the English translation of the *Wissenschaft der Logik*, called *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. by A. V. Miller (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), will be given as Miller and the page number. On the whole I use Miller's rendering of Hegel's text, except where I believe that it needs to be changed to make a point. My changes usually consists of rendering the text more literally than Miller does. Although this serves to make the translation more wooden than Miller's excellent and flowing translation of the *Logik*, it brings some technical terms into highlight. Where Miller uses "Notion" as a translation of "*Begriff*," I use "conception" and sometimes use "conception as such." In particular, where Hegel attributes something to "the concept," I render it the "conception as such"; I give a justification for this translation in Chapters One and Four. Where Miller uses a variety of terms (but mostly "sublate") for "*aufheben*," I use "integrate." For the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, I give only the paragraph number (represented by §) and follow mostly the translation by William Wallace in *The Logic of Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965). I take more liberty with altering for effect the Wallace translation than I do with the Miller translation. My reason for doing so is that the Wallace translation is much too loose to represent the rigor of Hegel's terminology; what Wallace's translation gains in readability for Hegel's text, it loses in its claim to be a faithful rendering of the original.

An edition of Hegel's complete works that is also widely used and avail-

able (and is becoming the de facto standard edition) is the *Theorie Werkausgabe* of Hegel's works—G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1969). The pagination for it will be cited as TW, the volume number and the page.

I almost never alter the excellent translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952) except occasionally to bring out some technical term. This has the same advantages and disadvantages as altering Miller's translation. It makes the translation every now and then a bit more wooden than Knox's own fluid rendering of Hegel's text, but it sometimes helps to make a point.

There is no good translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of History*. I follow the only complete edition in English, translated by J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956). I also cite the *Theorie Werkausgabe* edition. Those who check will note that I frequently alter the Sibree translation quite a bit, although I have tried to stay by it as much as possible.

I try as much as possible to keep the quotes from Hegel's works in the notes, rather than in the body of the text. I have done this in order to give a little more flow to what is already not exactly a breezy manuscript. If I were to embed all the textual citations into the body of the text, I fear it would lose whatever readability it has.

INTRODUCTION

1. Indeed, because it is built on Kant's transcendental philosophy, Hegel's philosophy may be profitably seen as an attempt to explain how things are possible. For a similar characterization of philosophy as the explanation of possibility, see Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), pp. 8–18. I found Nozick's discussion of this way of construing philosophical theories to be very helpful in understanding Hegel's own ideas, although Nozick, as far as I can see, does not view himself as carrying on any kind of Hegelian project.

2. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

3. This can be contrasted with a foundationalist view of philosophy. This latter view would see philosophy as concerned with the "first principles" of an enterprise. On that view, mathematicians, for example, construct mathematical proofs, but it is philosophers who provide the first principles of mathematics. Whatever the merits of a foundationalist view, it is not the Hegelian one; rather, it is one he strongly opposes.

4. See Johannes Heinrichs, *Die Logik der "Phänomenologie des Geistes"* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974), for a thorough presentation of this view of the relation of the Jena system to the *Phenomenology*. Heinrichs also explains in this way

many of the discrepancies between the *Science of Logic* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

5. This contrasts sharply with another line of interpretation, such as that taken by Michael Rosen in his *Hegel's Dialectic and Its Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Rosen spends a good bit of time and energy trying to show that what Hegel was *really* up to was a piece of neo-Platonic nonsense in which Thought develops itself noninferentially (p. 72) in a form of movement that generates the content of reality and that we can only follow in its non-inferential development (p. 91). It has no inferential principles (p. 75). He argues against more plausible readings of Hegel that whatever their other virtues may be, they are not readings of *Hegel*. Any interpretation of Hegel that is true to his thought will come to the conclusion that there is nothing to be salvaged in his work (p. 179). This seems misguided. Any great philosopher's works permit different interpretations, and the interpretation that should be favored is the one that does not make the philosopher's works into patent nonsense. Again, suppose we could somehow miraculously summon up Hegel, offer him a quick course in philosophy since 1831, give him Rosen's book to read, and then ask him what he thought about it. At least two things are possible: he could shake his head and mumble about how Rosen had misinterpreted him, how he should have been more careful when he wrote such and such—then he could give us what was in his mind the better reading of his work. He would then be behaving like many thinkers (both the better and the worse among them) do. Or he could insist (to my dismay) that this was indeed the correct reading of his work and express incredulity that Rosen (among others) finds it patent nonsense. I and others could then try to point out to him that he might have taken such and such a tack and been better off. In that way, we would be behaving as many of us do nowadays: trying to show that this or that way of arguing is the better way of proceeding. Rosen's procedure seems therefore unnecessarily sterile as a method for interpreting works in either the history of philosophy or, for that matter, in contemporary philosophy. This is not to say that we often should not try to understand the actual historical situation in terms of which the author understood himself; but Rosen's text does not do that with regard to Hegel.

6. I have made one minor interpretive decision that should be noted. I have decided more or less to follow Hegel's own exposition in interpreting his work. This is, admittedly, the traditional way of interpreting Hegel. It contrasts sharply with another interpretive strategy, that of isolating what one takes to be the basic theses in Hegel's thought and looking for the independent arguments found for those theses. The pitfalls of this latter approach, from my point of view, are that it does not take seriously the Hegelian claim that each thesis is intelligible only as an explanation of how some apparent incompatibility is possible. Hegel's insistence on the systematic ordering of his philosophy is one of his theses that itself must be taken

seriously, and one can do that only if one looks at the positions in the systematic way in which Hegel intended. However, for an excellent example of the best use of the strategy of isolating basic theses in Hegel's thought, see Michael Inwood, *Hegel* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983).

CHAPTER ONE

1. G. W. F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1969), §3. All translations from the *Enzyklopädie* are my own. Hereafter I cite it as *Encyclopedia*, followed by the section number (§).

2. *Encyclopedia*, §5.

3. "Matters" is not quite adequate as a translation of *Sache*, but neither is anything else. "*Sache*" can mean quite a number of related things, depending on the context. It could be rendered as "object," but then one would have to render the term "*Gegenstand*" in Hegel's work as something other than "object." One could also render it as "thing," but that would make little sense in the context in question. Miller renders it sometimes as "import," sometimes as "object," with the latter rendering most closely approximating the sense Hegel intends to give it (at least according to the reading I am giving here of Hegel's views). "Matters" is not quite felicitous, but I can think of no other way in English to draw the distinction I wish to make and also provide consistent translations of other terms from Hegel.

4. WdL, I, p. 18; Miller, p. 39; TW, 5, p. 29.

5. WdL, I, p. 26; Miller, p. 45; TW, 5, p. 38.

6. WdL, I, p. 30; Miller, p. 45; TW, 5, p. 38.

7. WdL, I, p. 36; Miller, p., 54; TW, 5, p. 50.

8. This is unfortunately bound to be a bit misleading, since Hegel later uses the idea of a "thing" (*Ding*) as a separate category of the Doctrine of Essence. There it signifies a kind of substructural unity that possesses various phenomenal properties. Hegel is not, I think, consistent here in his usage.

9. This actually corresponds to Hegel's sense of "representation," *Vorstellung*. See Chapter Four.

10. For this distinction of concept and conception, see among others, Ronald Dworkin. *Law's Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 71–72.

11. Klaus Hartmann is the foremost proponent of this reading of Hegel in terms of its being a categorial philosophy. Hartmann sees Hegel's project as a descendant therefore of both Aristotle's theory of the categories and Kant's transcendental justification of the categories. See Klaus Hartmann, "Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View," in Alasdair MacIntyre, ed., *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 101–124.

12. Hegel does not tell us of his derivation of the term "moment," except

in one place in the *Logic* and in a corresponding passage in the *Encyclopedia*. There he uses the examples of weights and levers: "In the case of the lever, weight and distance from a point are called its mechanical moments on account of the sameness of their effect, in spite of the contrast otherwise between something real, such as a weight, and something ideal, such as mere spatial determination, a line." WdL, I, p. 94; Miller, p. 107; TW, 5, p. 114. Hegel seems to make metaphorical use of the term to capture the idea that some concepts may be understood both independently and in terms of each other.

13. Unfortunately, like many such distinctions, this one is difficult to apply in all cases. Kant, for instance, offered such transcendental explanations; however, in at least the "Refutation of Idealism" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he also claimed to have proven the existence of objects in space and time.

14. See Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1955), p. 14; *Philosophy of Right*, translated by T.M. Knox, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 10; TW, 7, p. 24.

15. See Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

16. WdL, II, p. 217; Miller, p. 580; TW, 6, p. 249.

17. *Encyclopedia*, §13.

18. WdL, I, p. 38; Miller, p. 56; TW, 5, p. 52.

19. WdL, II, p. 493; Miller, p. 833; TW, 6, pp. 559-560.

20. WdL, I, p. 38; Miller, p. 56; TW, 5, p. 52.

21. This view of Hegel's philosophy has some affinity with the view put forth by Michael Theunissen in his *Sein und Schein: die kritische Funktion der Hegelschen Logik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978). I learned much through reading Theunissen's thorough reconstruction and presentation of the various assertions contained in Hegel's *Logic*, and I share some of his general ideas about it. Theunissen stresses there the crucial role of "mere appearance" (*Schein*) in Hegel's *Logic* and the objectivity of *Schein* in Hegel's overall thought. The compatibilist reading of Hegel that I give at least shares this much in common with Theunissen's emphasis. What is always important for Hegel in his criticisms of classical metaphysics is that the oppositions found in it—between, for example, monism and pluralism—are only *apparent* incompatibilities. They are, that is, only a part of *Schein*.

Second, Theunissen sees that project of "Hegel's *Logic* is, in accordance with the methodological idea that underlies it, the unity of critique and presentation [*Darstellung*] of metaphysics" (Theunissen, p. 16). We can take Theunissen as seeing each major division of the *Logic* as "presenting" a type of metaphysical thought and the next stage of the *Logic* as offering a critique of the previous stage and therefore of the metaphysical thought based on it. For example, the logic of the "Doctrine of Being" is a presentation of the metaphysics of objectifying thought ("*vergegenständlichen Denkens*") (p. 25). This type of thought sees its determinations as independent, as joined only by the "unmediated also" (p. 27). The logic of the "Doctrine of Essence" is the

critique of this type of thought. However, Theunissen draws several conclusions from this that I do not draw. The "Doctrine of the Concept," he thinks, is not only the "*Aufhebung*" of the previous logics of being and essence; it reveals a "truth" that traditional metaphysics was not able to provide: that "objectifying thought" is false to the world and that the unity of subjects in a sphere of communicative freedom is the "truth" of the matter.

Theunissen sees Hegel's project as establishing a kind of theory of communicative freedom. He bases this in part on his understanding of the relation between Hegel's theology and his *Logic*. Theunissen tries to show that Hegel's sometimes colorful way of describing his concepts (particularly, his speaking of "the concept" in anthropomorphic terms or as "free love") is not in fact metaphorical. The *Logic* is to be a theology, a "logos of logos, which . . . is love" (Theunissen, p. 50). Moreover, the *Logic* is for Theunissen really a theory of universal communication. The freedom of the concept is freedom of a particular sort, namely, communicative freedom, in which "one experiences the other not as a limit but as the condition of the possibility of one's own self-actualization" (Theunissen, p. 46). This experience is therefore one of love. The truth revealed by Hegel's *Logic* thus turns out to have a theological basis.

Moreover, Theunissen sees the role of *Schein* in a much different fashion than I do. Metaphysical thought is always of a substrate, and it is Hegel's intention, on Theunissen's reading, to provide an *Aufhebung*, a destruction of traditional metaphysics (p. 52). To show that all is *Schein*, for Theunissen, means to show how such substrate thinking is contradictory. Moreover, *Schein* is "produced by isolating thought" (p. 76), presumably, the "objectifying thought" that Theunissen thinks characterizes traditional metaphysics. Now, Hegel certainly critiques the idea of explanation by a substrate, particularly in the "Doctrine of Essence," but I do not see how this leads to Theunissen's idea of Hegel's *Logic* as a theory of communicative competence.

This is not the place to go into a detailed criticism of Theunissen's idea of the relation of the various major divisions of the *Logic*. Indeed, given Theunissen's quite obvious mastery of the Hegelian texts, any critic of his reading must do so in fear and trembling. However, it seems to me that whatever the other merits of Theunissen's finely nuanced reading of the *Logic*, he does not show convincingly that Hegel succeeds at any of this. In many cases where there are difficult or particularly obscure places in Hegel's text, Theunissen relies more on quoting Hegel or explaining a transition in Hegel's own dense phraseology than on elucidating the transition in a way that would make it defensible. This is not to deny the care and subtlety that Theunissen uses in his exposition of Hegel.

One should not of course deny that there is a theological component to Hegel's thought. However, Theunissen's reading of this component in terms of the theory of communicative competence seems to me vastly to overplay the possibility of reading such political themes into Hegel's overall theory.

But in any event, the assertion that such theological ideas are the basis of Hegel's theory can ring true only if there is no plausible way of reading Hegel's texts that do not make reference to such theological ideas. I hope to show that this is not the case.

This does not mean that one need be blind to the rather striking similarities between Hegelian and, say, Marxian theories. However, the most basic similarity between Marx and Hegel seems to me to consist simply in their respective ideas of explanation. In *Capital*, for example, Marx is concerned with explaining the possibility of fundamental ideas of political economy, such as profit. The idea of profit seems problematic because it is not clear how there can be any "extra" for the capitalist if labor is paid its full value. Marx explains it by the idea of labor's producing more value than it takes to reproduce itself (labor produces products of greater value than the capitalist has to pay the laborer to continue producing the products). This is a typical Hegelian "explanation of the possibility of X" type of move; and, given Marx's indebtedness to Hegel along with his strong disagreements with Hegel's supposed idealism, it is not surprising that this would be what the two have in common. This kind of similarity between Marx and Hegel is detailed in Klaus Hartmann, *Die Marxsche Theorie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970).

22. The pragmatists, particularly Dewey, take up something like this distinction of reason and understanding in their account of justification.

23. *Encyclopedia*, §14.

24. To say that authentic philosophy begins with Parmenides is not to say that philosophy in general begins with Parmenides, and Hegel in fact does not say that. The idea of philosophy as an explanatory enterprise begins in fact with Thales. However, this enterprise does not receive truly philosophical expression until Parmenides. Hegel is quite clear about this: "Since in this an advance into the region of the ideal is observable, Parmenides began authentic philosophy." *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. by E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974; reprint of the Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co. edition of 1892), p. 254. TW, 18, p. 290. (I altered the Haldane and Simson translation slightly, translating "*eigentliche Philosophie*" as "authentic philosophy".)

CHAPTER TWO

1. The determinateness of something consists of its characteristics. For Hegel, categories would be the basic types of determinateness of being, the basic characteristics of what is.

2. See Dieter Henrich's discussion of the beginning of the *Logic* in his "Anfang und Methode der Logik" included in his collection of essays, *Hegel im Kontext* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1971), pp. 73-94.

3. WdL, I, p. 55; Miller, p. 71; TW, 5, p. 70.

4. WdL, I, p. 55; Miller, p. 71; TW, 5, p. 70.

5. WdL, I, p. 66; Miller, p. 82; TW, 5, p. 82.

6. WdL, I, p. 60; Miller, p. 75; TW, 5, p. 75.

7. Hegel must be intending the concept of being to be a primitive term.

We should distinguish primitive terms (those that are undefinable within a given system) from primitive propositions (those that are unprovable within a given system). Hegel is not making a point about which propositions serve as axioms in a theory; he seems to be claiming that the concept of being is itself not definable in terms of any more basic concepts. (Wayne Davis suggested this to me). The conception of being that first emerges (the Parmenidean conception of being as indeterminate) is an interpretation of this primitive concept but proves to be an incoherent belief.

8. "But it is equally true that they are not undistinguished from each other, that, on the contrary, they are not the same, that they are absolutely distinct, and yet they are unseparated and inseparable and that each immediately *vanishes in its opposite*." WdL, I, p. 67; Miller, p. 83; TW, 5, p. 83.

9. If this is just an assumption, one might wonder why we should begin at all with a conception of pure being. Why not just go ahead and begin with a conception of determinate being [*Dasein*] and be done with it? I take it that among his other reasons, Hegel held that there was no philosophical problem at all with showing the difference between determinate being and nothing. Nothing has no properties, determinate being does, therefore there is a difference. The dialectic can begin only if there is some philosophical dilemma to be resolved. This dilemma appears in the alleged contradiction between the idea of (Parmenidean) being and nothing. Without this assumption, the dialectic could not begin. Hegel's philosophy is thus not without presuppositions, as he thought. But this need not be taken as a devastating objection. If indeed the only presupposition is that being is different than nothing, Hegel has at least begun with something very minimal.

10. WdL, I, p. 67; Miller, p. 83; TW, 5, p. 83.

11. WdL, I, p. 79; Miller, p. 93; TW, 5, p. 97. This characterization of "becoming" was suggested to me by Klaus Hartmann.

12. "What is first in the *science* had of necessity to show itself *historically* as the first." WdL, I, p. 74; Miller, p. 88; TW, 5, p. 91.

13. WdL, I, p. 54; Miller, p. 70; TW, 5, p. 69.

14. WdL, I, p. 56; Miller, p. 71; TW, 5, p. 71.

15. WdL, I, p. 56; Miller, p. 71; TW, 5, p. 71.

16. The first two logics constitute what Hegel calls the objective logic. In classical metaphysics there were distinctions of general metaphysics and special metaphysics. General metaphysics was concerned with the nature of being as being, whereas special metaphysics was concerned with an account of particular types of being, such as God, the soul and the world. Hegel says that "it is first and immediately *ontology* whose place is taken by objective logic" (WdL, p. 46; Miller, p. 63; TW, 5, p. 61). Theunissen takes this sense

of "ontology" to be equivalent to general metaphysics. (See Michael Theunissen, *Sein und Schein: die kritische Funktion der Hegelschen Logik* [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978], p. 39.) Theunissen takes therefore the doctrine of objective being to be a reconstruction and critique of classical general metaphysics. However, Hegel also intends it to be a critique of special metaphysics, since the categories reconstructed in the *Logic* are used later to reconstruct the more particular categories of the philosophy of mind. Moreover, the analogy between general and special metaphysics and the various books of Hegel's *Logic* does not hold up completely. The "Doctrine of the Concept" is not a treatise on God and the soul and thus does not correspond to special metaphysics. On the distinction of classical and general metaphysics, see also Ignacio Angelelli, *Studies on Gottlob Frege and Traditional Philosophy* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1967).

17. "Since the unity of being and nothing as the primary truth now forms once and for all the basis and element of all that follows, besides *becoming* itself, all further logical determinations: determinate being, quality and generally all philosophical conceptions, are examples of this unity." WdL, I, p. 70; Miller, p. 85; TW, 5, p. 86.

18. WdL, I, p. 68; Miller, p. 83; TW, 5, p. 84.

19. WdL, I, p. 68; Miller, p. 83; TW, 5, p. 84.

20. WdL, I, 85; Miller, p. 99; TW, 5, p. 104.

21. WdL, I, p. 90; Miller, p. 103; TW, 5, p. 109.

22. Hegel says of such preliminary posits: "but it is such *for us in our reflection*, it is not yet *posited* as such in its own self . . . only that which is posited in a conception belongs in the dialectical development of that conception to its content; whereas the determinateness that is not yet posited in the conception itself belongs to our reflection, whether it concerns the nature of the conception itself or is an external comparison. To draw attention to a determinateness of the latter kind can only serve to elucidate or indicate in advance the course which will be exhibited in the development itself. That the whole, the unity of being and nothing, is in the one-sided determinateness of being is an external reflection; but in the negation, in *something* and *other* and so on, it will come to be *posited*." WdL, I, pp. 96–97; Miller, p. 110; TW, 5, pp. 116–117. To speak of something's being "posited in a conception" and "belonging to the dialectical development of that conception" means that it is logically or theoretically bound up with that conception. Any conception of natural forces, for example, must also be linked to a conception of causality. If you change your conception of causality, you will also have to change your conception of force.

23. The later Heidegger makes great use of what he calls the difference between Being and beings, *Sein* and *Seiende*. Metaphysics, he claims, is the attempt to see Being as the "ground" of beings. (Thus, Heidegger claims that metaphysics is both ontology and theology, as the search for the ground common to all beings or the highest being that accounts for everything.) But

in its attempt to provide a ground for beings, metaphysics becomes science and technology, the disciplines that rigorously study such “grounding” and “causal” relations. To really get at the nature of being, Heidegger claims that we must foreswear this “metaphysical” thought and learn to “think” Being and the difference of Being and beings in some more primordial sense that cannot be captured in our western metaphysical languages. According to Heidegger, Hegel takes Being to be the ground of beings, as the “logos” or “logic” of beings. Thus, Hegel’s theory rests on the ungrounded assumption, part of the Western metaphysical tradition, that the “difference” of Being and beings is to be understood in terms of a “grounding” relation between the two. The way in which the “difference” is understood is both more primordial than other distinctions and distinguishes whole cultures and epochs from each other; it is certainly more primordial than the particular Western understanding of the difference as one of grounding and causation. Hegel’s reply to this would be, first, quite simply to note that it is incoherent to talk about Being in distinction from beings, as he shows in the *Logic*. Hegel moreover would not be surprised that Heidegger might find this “difference” difficult to express, since any incoherent distinction is difficult to express. Second, Hegel is not trying to offer a “ground” (which Heidegger takes to be a *prima causa*) of beings at all; he is trying to offer an explanation of how it is possible to think truly and coherently of what is. (It is also, shall we say, questionable whether any of the great metaphysicians was trying to offer a “ground” of beings in Heidegger’s sense, rather than alternative explanations of the possibility of true thought.) Hegel need not be greatly troubled, therefore, by any of Heidegger’s doubts about the validity of his program, having anticipated part of the charge. Heidegger makes these charges in many writings. A representative example of his thought on this, especially since it is ostensibly concerned with Hegel’s *Logic*, is his essay “The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics” in Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. by Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 42–76 (the German text is also contained in this volume, pp. 107–146).

24. WdL, I, p. 77; Miller, p. 92; TW, 5, p. 95.

25. In his “Hegel’s Logik der Reflexion”—*Hegel im Kontext*, pp. 95–156—Dieter Henrich claims that in Hegel’s *Logic* “immediacy” has what he calls a “shift of meaning” (*Bedeutungsverschiebung*). Henrich takes this idea from the philosophy of science; he intends to say that “immediacy” shifts its meaning in Hegel’s theory in the way in which, for example, some philosophers of science claim that “space” shifts its meaning from Newtonian to Einsteinian physics. Henrich claims that “immediacy” shifts from an earlier meaning of “without relation” (*Beziehungslosigkeit*) to one of “self-relation” (*Selbstbeziehung*) (p. 111). In the first sense, something is immediate when it is not mediated by something else; it is indifferent to mediation. In the second sense, something is immediate when it is a case of self-sufficient mediation. I see no reason to make the assumption that there is any shift in meaning in the term.

Whether something is to be classified as mediate or immediate depends on how one sees its position in the theory. There is no contradiction between saying that, from one point of view, something is immediate and, from another point of view, it is mediate. There is thus no contradiction to be avoided by postulating a shift of meaning in the concept. This also avoids some of the internal problems in Henrich's idea of a "shift of meaning" as applying to a theory like the Hegelian one. On this last point, see David Lachterman, "Response to Professor Henrich" in Dieter Henrich, ed., *Die Wissenschaft der Logik und die Logik der Reflexion*, Beiheft 18 of *Hegel-Studien* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1978), pp. 325–328. In that volume Henrich gives, incidentally, an expanded and reworked interpretation of the logic of reflection, "*Hegels Logik der Reflexion: Neue Fassung*," pp. 203–324.

26. Hegel seems to use "truth" [*Wahrheit*] in several ways. When one moves to a new category that resolves the dilemmas of the lower level, the new category is often said to be the *truth* of the previous categories. This fits well with a coherence theory of truth, since it means that only at the level of the new categories can one be consistent. Hegel also says that "something only has truth insofar as it is the Idea" (WdL, II, p. 407; Miller, p. 755; TW, 6, p. 462). But then Hegel also says that "Truth in philosophy means that the conception corresponds to reality." *Rechtsphilosophie*, TW, 7, p. 73; *Philosophy of Right*, §21, Zusatz.

27. "Determinate being corresponds to being in the previous sphere, but being is indeterminate and therefore no determinations issue from it. *Determinate* being, however, is *concrete*; consequently a number of determinations, distinct relations of its moments, make their appearance in it." WdL, I, p. 97; Miller, p. 110; TW, 5, p. 117.

28. WdL, I, p. 96; Miller, p. 110; TW, 5, p. 116.

29. WdL, I, p. 97; Miller, p. 111; TW, 5, p. 118.

30. See WdL, I, p. 98. [Miller, 111]

31. WdL, I, p. 97; Miller, p. 111; TW, 5, p. 118.

32. WdL, I, p. 98; Miller, p. 98; TW, 5, p. 118. Miller translates *Verneinung* as "negative."

33. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123.

34. This is different from the view of negation expressed by Dieter Henrich in his "Formen der Negation in Hegels Logik" in Rolf-Peter Horstmann, ed. *Seminar: Dialektik in der Philosophie Hegels* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978), pp. 213–229. Henrich takes negation to be an autonomous operation in Hegel's logic, constructing even itself. This imputes a very esoteric sense to Hegel's idea of negation. Henrich claims that among its virtues, however, such an interpretation of negation allows many passages in the text to be clearly elucidated. I do not think, however, that one needs to supply Hegel with such an esoteric idea to make good sense of his texts. The interpretation that I am giving here is an attempt at such an alternative.

35. "WdL, I, p. 103; Miller, pp. 115–116; TW, 5, p. 124. "Negativity" is

the term that Hegel uses to describe dialectical philosophy and thought in general. Speaking of formalism, Hegel says that "it lacks the essential *dialectical* moment of *negativity*; yet this moment enters into the triplicity of determinations because the third is the unity of the first two, integrated determinations." WdL, II, p. 498; Miller, p. 837; TW, 6, p. 565.

36. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123.

37. See WdL, I, pp. 101–102; Miller, pp. 114–115; TW, 5, pp. 122–123.

38. "In determinate being its determinateness has been distinguished as quality; in quality as determinately present, there is distinction—of reality and negation . . . negation is determinate being, not the supposedly abstract nothing but posited here as it is in itself, affirmatively present [*als seiend*], belonging to the sphere of determinate being." WdL, I, pp. 101–102; Miller, pp. 114–115; TW, 5, pp. 122–123.

39. "What is, therefore, in fact present is determinate being in general, distinction in it, and integration of this distinction . . . this integratedness of the distinction is determinate being's *own* determinateness." WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123.

40. *Encyclopedia*, §6: "Philosophy's correspondence with actuality and experience is necessary, in that philosophy is different only in form from other types of awareness of one and the same content. Indeed, this correspondence can be taken for at least an external test of the truth of a philosophy, as it is taken to be the highest goal of science, to bring forth through the knowledge of this correspondence the reconciliation of self-conscious reason with *existent* reason, with actuality." But as Hegel notes, this can only be an *external*, not immanent test of the truth of a philosophy. Nonetheless, this way of reading the text provides one way of understanding the transition to plurality. John Findlay, for example, seems to take this interpretation: "Hegel now points out, without showing dialectically why this must be so—and tacitly accepting the Identity of Indiscernibles—that the picking out or pinning down of a *Daseyn* is not possible unless what we pin down has some *qualitative colouring*: though we may not recognize a detachable universal present in a particular instance, yet the thing picked out must in some obscure way assert itself as such and such against an ambient background from which such a qualification is lacking." J. N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-examination* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 159–160.

41. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123.

42. "Further, the refutation must not come from outside, that is, it must not proceed from assumptions lying outside the system in question and inconsistent with it. The system need only refuse to recognize those assumptions; the *defect* is a defect only for him who starts from the requirements and demands based on those assumptions." WdL, II, p. 217; Miller, pp. 580–581; TW, 5, p. 250.

43. This discussion of classical and modern views of existence is taken from Angelelli, *Studies in Gottlob Frege*.

44. See *ibid.*, pp. 225–226; see also Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949), pp. 76–82.

45. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123. In this passage I translate “die Einfachheit des Daseins vermittelt durch dieses Aufheben” differently than Miller does; he renders it “the simple oneness of determinate being resulting from this sublation.”

46. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115, TW, 5, p. 123.

47. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123.

48. WdL, I, p. 102; Miller, p. 115; TW, 5, p. 123. I am translating *im Begriff* as “in conception as such.” I take Hegel to mean by *im Begriff* the section of the *Logic* called the “Doctrine of the Concept (*Begriff*).” This translation is admittedly awkward, but Hegel’s own sentence is not exactly itself a model of clarity. The idea is that in thinking of the conditions under which conceptions are formed—not just particular conceptions of being or essence but conceptions of what is entailed by the idea of forming conceptions—we naturally arrive at a general conception of a thinking and acting subject, and we are naturally led to a particular conception of the thinking and acting subject.

49. This kind of reading is radically different from those offered by interpreters such as Charles Taylor. See his *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Taylor holds that the sense of negation that is being employed by Hegel is of two sorts: a contrastive one (“It is essential to the meaning of our descriptive concepts that they be contrasted with others . . . the red object is also essentially not-blue; it can only be grasped as red if it is grasped as not-blue,” pp. 233–234) and a causal one (“Hegel seems to move from this unexceptionable point . . . to the notion of determinate beings in a kind of struggle to maintain themselves in face of others, and hence as ‘negating’ each other in an active sense . . . when we talk of ‘something’ and not just qualities, we can see that they are not just related contrastively in our characterization of them, but that they also enter into a multiplicity of causal relations with each other, relations which form the causal background to their maintenance, their alteration, or their eventual disappearance,” p. 234). Taylor thinks that this shows up a number of confusions in Hegel’s treatment, not the least of which is that, architectonically seen, causality is a category of essence, not of being. This would be a confusion if indeed Hegel was guilty of it. He does not speak of causality in this section any more than he speaks of space and time. This is because he believes that the necessity of these more developed concepts rests on their being complements to the kind of explanations that occur in the section on being. Overall, Taylor seems to mistake the kinds of issues in the *Logic* with epistemological or criterial considerations (with issues, for example, about how we distinguish things from one another—in his summary of the dialectic of the “something,” he notes, “Determinacy is a criterial property of reality,” p. 238).

50. WdL, I, p. 103; Miller, p. 116; TW, 5, p. 124.

51. Hegel takes Kant's arguments in the footnote to §16 of the B (1787) version of the "Transcendental Deduction" of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as showing that the condition of conceptual thought—of the synthetic unity of apperception—provides for the necessity of the category of plural individuality. I discuss this in Chapter Four.

52. "The word 'this' serves to fix the distinction and the something which is to be taken affirmatively. But 'this' clearly expresses that this distinguishing and signaling of the one something is a subjective designating falling outside the something itself . . . By 'this' we *mean* to express something completely determined; it is overlooked that speech, as a work of the understanding, gives expression only to universals, except in the *name* of a single object; but the individual name is meaningless, in the sense that it does not express a universal, and for the same reason appears as something merely posited and arbitrary; just as proper names, too, can be arbitrarily assumed, given or also altered." WdL, I, pp. 104–105; Miller, p. 117; TW, 5, pp. 125–126.

53. See WdL, I, p. 105; Miller, p. 118; TW, 5, p. 126.

54. WdL, I, p. 105; Miller, p. 118; TW, 5, p. 126.

55. "Insofar as something is in an other or is for an other, it lacks a being of its own." WdL, I, p. 107; Miller, p. 120; TW, 5, p. 129.

56. "There are present here *two pairs* of determinations: 1. Something and other, 2. Being-for-other and being-in-itself. The former contain the unrelatedness of their determinateness; something and other fall apart. But their truth is their relation [*Beziehung*]; being-for-other and being-in-itself are, therefore, the above determinations posited as *moments* of one and the same something, as determinations which are relations and which remain in their unity, in the unity of determinate being." WdL, I, p. 106; Miller, p. 119; TW, 5, p. 128.

57. In the section of his *Logic* on "something and its other," Hegel is alluding, I take it, to Kant. Compare Kant: "All that alters *persists*, and only its *state changes*. Since this change thus concerns only the determinations, which cease to be or begin to be, we can say, using what may seem a somewhat paradoxical expression, that only the permanent (substance) is altered, and the transitory suffers no alteration but only a *change*, inasmuch as certain determinations cease to be and others begin to be." *Critique of Pure Reason*, A187 = B230–231.

58. The category of "Substrate" properly belongs to the "Doctrine of Essence." Hegel's point, as I understand it, is that the idea of a substrate evolves naturally out of the idea of being itself. As soon as we introduce the idea of plural individuals, we are led to the idea of a substrate, which the categories of being are inadequate to explain.

59. "Nature does not begin with the qualitative but with the quantitative, because its determination is not like that of logical being, an abstract-first and immediate, but rather it is essentially already that which is *mediated* in itself, being external and being other [*Äußerlich- und Anderssein*]." *Encyclopedia*, §254;

TW, 9, p. 42.

60. "Since space is thus only this inner negation of itself, its self-integrating [*das Sichaufheben*] of its moments is its truth; time is the existence [*Dasein*] of this continuous self-integrating, and thus in time the point has actuality." *Encyclopedia*, §257, Anmerkung. Hegel also holds that the real step from ideality to existence is the move from determinate space and time to matter. "Matter is the first reality, existent [*daseiende*] being-for-self; it is not merely abstract being but the positive subsistence of space as, however, excluding other space. The point also *ought* to exclude, but it does not yet do so, since it is only abstract negation." §261, Anmerkung.

61. WdL, II, p. 263; Miller, p. 622.

62. See Bertrand Russell, *The Principles of Mathematics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1903).

63. See Bertrand Russell, *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1919); p. 107.

64. See Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 157. Russell cites, for example, the logical calculus, projective geometry, and the theory of groups.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

66. "Consequently, the one is not capable of becoming an other; it is *unalterable*." WdL, I, p. 155; Miller, p. 164; TW, 5, p. 183. Hegel also notes, "because it follows from this moment of self-determining that there is no other to which the one can go, and the movement has thus returned into itself." WdL, I, p. 155; Miller, p. 165; TW, 5, p. 183. Hegel takes the dialectic of this idea in its undeveloped state a bit further. As an indeterminate totality (which is what it would be if one ended the explanation at simply the idea of a "one" that posited the "many"), it is equivalent to the ancient idea of the void. In fact, Hegel conjectures, it is precisely because the ancients ceased their explanatory activity too early that they were naturally pushed to the various theories of atomism and the void. Hegel also conjectures that the reason why such explanations were superseded by later explanations was that they were unstable in the same way that Parmenides's attempt at explanation was unstable: they were inherently incoherent; the one and the void as characterized by the philosophers who used such constructs were indistinguishable just as being and nothing as characterized by Parmenides were indistinguishable from each other.

67. In support of this way of taking the passage is Hegel's remark, "Thus plurality appears not as an *otherness*, but as a determination completely external to the one. . . . That the ones are related to one another as *others*, are brought together into the determinateness of a plurality, does not therefore concern the ones. If plurality were a relation of the ones themselves to one another they would limit one another and there would affirmatively present in them a being-for-other." WdL, I, p. 159; Miller, p. 168; TW, 5, p. 188.

68. This is Hegel's statement of the argument: "The being-for-self of the one, is, however, essentially the ideality of determinate being and of other:

it relates itself not to an other but only *to itself*. But since being-for-self is fixed as a one, as *affirmatively* for itself, as *immediately* present, its *negative* relation *to itself* is at the same time a relation to an *affirmative being*; and since the relation is just as much negative, that to which it relates itself remains determined as a *determinate being* and an *other*; as essentially *self-relation*, the other is not indeterminate negation as the void but is likewise a *one*. The one is consequently a *becoming of many ones*." WdL, I, p. 158; Miller, p. 167; TW, 5, pp. 186–187. Why Hegel says "consequently" here is not immediately apparent.

69. See Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 68.

70. Hegel uses the language of repulsion and attraction to talk of this: "In attraction, however, ideality is realized. Repulsion passes over into attraction, the many ones into *one* one. Both repulsion and attraction are in the first place distinct from each other, the former as the reality of the ones, the latter as their posited ideality." WdL, I, p. 164; Miller, p. 173; TW, 5, p. 194.

71. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 348.

72. This has firm support in Hegel's text: "This one is thus the principle of quantum, but as the one of *quantity*. Hence, first, it is continuous, it is a *unity*; secondly, it is discrete, a plurality of ones, which is implicit in continuous, or explicit in discrete magnitude, the ones having equality with one another possessing the said continuity, the same unity." WdL, I, p. 197; Miller, p. 202; TW, 5, p. 231.

73. "It cannot be said the progressive determination of the species of calculation here given is a philosophy of them or that it exhibits, possibly, their inner significance because it is not in fact an immanent development of the conception." WdL, I, p. 207; Miller, pp. 211–212; TW, 5, p. 243.

74. "*Amount* and *unit* constitute the *moments* of number." WdL, I, p. 197; Miller, p. 203; TW, 5, p. 232.

75. "In mathematics a magnitude is defined as that which can be increased or diminished." WdL, I, p. 242; Miller, p. 243; TW, 5, p. 282.

76. "Further, we must premise that numbers can, in general, be produced in two ways, either by aggregation, or by separation of an aggregate already given; in both cases the same specific kind of counting is employed, so that to an aggregating of numbers there corresponds what may be called a *positive* species of calculation, and to a separating of them, a *negative* species." WdL, I, pp. 200–201; Miller, p. 206; TW, 5, p. 236.

77. "But it is a synthesis wholly analytical in nature, for the connection is quite artificial, there is nothing in it or put into it which is not quite externally given." WdL, I, p. 202; Miller, pp. 207–208; TW, 5, p. 238.

78. "The qualitative difference which constitutes the determinateness of number is, we have seen, that of unity and amount; consequently, every determinateness of the conception of number which can occur in the species of calculation can be reduced to this difference. But the difference which belongs to number as quanta, is external identity and external difference,

equality and *inequality*, which are moments of *reflection* and fall to be considered under the determinations of essence when we come to deal with *difference*." WdL, I, p. 200; Miller, p. 206; TW, 5, pp. 235–236.

79. Paul Lorenzen has done something like this. See Paul Lorenzen, *Konstruktive Logik, Ethik und Wissenschaftstheorie* (Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut, 1973).

80. "The infinite as thus posited over against the finite, in a relation wherein they are as qualitatively distinct others, is to be called the *bad infinite*, the infinite of the understanding, for which it has the value of the highest, the absolute Truth. The understanding is satisfied that it has truly reconciled these two, but the truth is that it is entangled in unreconciled, unresolved, absolute contradiction. . . . This contradiction occurs as a direct result of the circumstance that the finite remains as an existent [*Dasein*] opposed to the infinite, so that there are *two* determinatenesses; *there are* two worlds, one infinite and one finite, and in their relationship the infinite is only the *limit* of the finite and is thus only a determinate infinite, an *infinite which is itself finite*." WdL, I, p. 128; Miller, pp. 139–140; TW, 5, p. 152.

81. "This progress makes its appearance wherever *relative* determinations are pressed to the point of opposition, with the result that although they are in an inseparable unity, each is credited with a self-subsistent existence [*Das-ein*] over against the other. The progress is, consequently, a *contradiction* which is not resolved but is always only enunciated as *present*." WdL, I, pp. 130–131; Miller, p. 142; TW, 5, p. 155.

82. See Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1955), p. 14; *Philosophy of Right*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 10; TW, 7, p. 24.

83. Speaking of the finite and the infinite, Hegel says, "The common element, the unity of the two determinatenesses, as unity, posits them in the first place as negated, since each is supposed to be what it is in its distinction from the other; in their unity, therefore, they lose their qualitative nature." WdL, I, p. 133; Miller, p. 144; TW, 5, p. 158.

84. "The infinitely great and infinitely small are therefore pictorial ideas [*Bilder der Vorstellung*] which, when looked at more closely, turn out to be nebulous shadowy nullities [*nichtiger Nebel und Schatten*]." WdL, I, p. 236; Miller, p. 238; TW, 5, p. 276.

85. "Although the mathematics of the infinite maintained that these quantitative determinations are vanishing magnitudes, i.e., magnitudes which are no longer any particular quantum and yet are not nothing but are still a *determinateness* relatively to an other, it seemed perfectly clear that such an *intermediate state*, as it was called, between being and nothing does not exist." WdL, I, p. 255; Miller, p. 254; TW, 5, pp. 296–297.

86. See Judith V. Grabiner, *The Origins of Cauchy's Rigorous Calculus* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1981), for an excellent history of these developments leading up to Cauchy's solutions to many of the problems posed by the people

whom Hegel discussed. Many of my points come from Grabiner's discussion of this. See also Carl B. Boyer, *The History of the Calculus and Its Conceptual Development* (New York: Dover Publications, 1949).

87. See Grabiner, *The Origins of Cauchy's Rigorous Calculus*, p. 21.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

89. Grabiner points out that this in part had to do with the rise of teaching responsibilities for scientists. In teaching, the mathematicians were naturally forced to reflect on the first principles of their disciplines. See *ibid.*, p. 25.

90. See *ibid.*, p. 24.

91. A. A. Luce and T. E. Jessup, eds. *The Works of George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951), pp. 65–102. Berkeley intended his attack to be on the presumption that science was "rational" whereas Christianity was "irrational". He wanted to show that the basic conceptions of the "new" science were no more free of paradox than were any of the Christian mysteries.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

93. See WdL, I, p. 259; Miller, p. 258; TW, 5, pp. 301–302.

94. WdL, I, p. 262; Miller, p. 261; TW, 5, p. 305.

95. Quoted in Grabiner, *The Origins of Cauchy's Rigorous Calculus*, p. 41.

96. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 44.

97. "In mathematics a magnitude is defined as that which can be increased or diminished; in general, as an indifferent limit. Now since the infinitely great or small is that which cannot be increased or diminished, it is in fact no longer a quantum as such." WdL, I, p. 242; Miller, p. 243; TW, 5, pp. 282–283.

98. WdL, I, p. 261; Miller, p. 260; TW, 5, p. 304.

99. WdL, I, p. 257; Miller, p. 256; TW, 5, p. 299.

100. WdL, I, p. 268; Miller, p. 266; TW, 5, p. 311.

101. WdL, I, p. 254; Miller, p. 253; TW, 5, p. 295.

102. WdL, I, p. 269; Miller, p. 267; TW, 5, p. 312. This idea was not new with Hegel. Simon L'Huilier, the winner of the prize from the Berlin Academy in 1784, made almost exactly the same point, claiming that dy/dx should be interpreted as a single number. (Although L'Huilier's work was not well known in his day, his winning the Berlin prize might have made his work known to Hegel). See Boyer, *The History of the Calculus*, p. 255. Bernhard Bolzano also made the same point about dy/dx being taken as a single symbol. Hegel could have known about Bolzano's work, but it is doubtful that he did, since Bolzano's work was little known in his day. There is some dispute about Bolzano's possible influence on Cauchy, since he anticipated some of Cauchy's results. See *ibid.*, p. 269; Grabiner, *The Origins of Cauchy's Rigorous Calculus*, p. 102. There is one other peculiarity to be noted here, since it gives even stronger evidence that Bertrand Russell never really read Hegel, or at least never read him even minimally closely. As is well known, Russell had an intense dislike for all things Hegelian (leave aside that he apparently

confused Hegel with Bradley; that is another story). One would have thought that in this case he would have praised Hegel. In the *Principles of Mathematics* Russell devotes a chapter to erroneous philosophical conceptions of the infinite, particularly as it is expressed in the calculus. In discussing what he takes to be the grievous blunders of Hermann Cohen, the neo-Kantian German philosopher, on the matter, Russell notes, "There are in the Calculus no such magnitudes as dx and dy . There are finite differences Δx and Δy , but no view, however elementary, will make x equal to $x + \Delta x$. There are ratios of finite differences, $\Delta y/\Delta x$, and in cases where the derivative of y exists, there is one real number to which $\Delta y/\Delta x$ can be made to approach as near as we like by diminishing Δx and Δy . This single real number we choose to denote by dy/dx ; but it is not a fraction, and dx and dy are nothing but typographical parts of one symbol." (emphasis added by me) p. 342. This is embarrassingly close to Hegel's explicit statements on the matter.

103. See the very important article by Michael Wolff, "Hegel und Cauchy. Eine Untersuchung zur Philosophie und Geschichte der Mathematik," in *Hegels Philosophie der Natur*, ed. by Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Michael John Petry (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1986), pp. 197–263, for a discussion of the Hegel/Leibniz connection. Wolff's article is an especially close and insightful reading of Hegel's thoughts on the conception of the infinite in mathematics.

104. John Findlay mistakenly thinks that Hegel would, on the basis of his reflections on the infinite, be delighted in Cantor's ideas (see Findlay, *Hegel: A Reexamination*, p. 163). Perhaps he would be delighted in one sense, but it would not be because he found it consistent with what he had said about the mathematical infinite. We would have to suppose that in fact Hegel would have been a little disgruntled about the matter. Who wouldn't be if he had spent as much time as Hegel had on a notion that turned out to require a little rethinking again?

105. WdL, I, p. 331; Miller, p. 322; TW, 5, p. 382.

106. In his piece "Hegel und Cauchy. Eine Untersuchung zur Philosophie und Geschichte der Mathematik," Michael Wolff however gives a lucid and sympathetic description of what Hegel wanted to do in this section. Hegel's descriptions of these ratios use the familiar language of eighteenth-century mathematics. However, Wolff also points out that Hegel's application of these ideas depart from the standard understanding of his time and are highly idiosyncratic.

107. "But that a quantitative difference, the definition of which is that it not only *can*, but *shall* be smaller than any given difference, is no longer a quantitative difference, this is self-evident, as self-evident as anything can be in mathematics." WdL, I, p. 271; Miller, p. 268; TW, 5, p. 314.

108. "The development of measure which has been attempted in the following chapters is extremely difficult. Starting from immediate, external measure it should, on the one hand, go on to develop the abstract deter-

mination of the *quantitative* aspects of natural objects (a mathematics of nature), and on the other hand, to indicate the connection between this determination of measure and *qualities* of natural objects, at least in general; for the specific proof, derived from the conception of the concrete object, of the *connection* between its qualitative and quantitative aspects, belongs to the special science of the concrete. . . . In this connection the general observation may be made that the different forms in which measure is realized belong also to different spheres of natural reality. The complete, abstract indifference of developed measure, i.e., the *laws* of measure, can only be manifested in the sphere of *mechanics* in which the concrete bodily factor is itself only *abstract* matter. . . . Natural science is still far from possessing an insight into the connection between such quantities and organic functions on which they wholly depend. But the readiest example of the reduction of an immanent measure to a merely externally determined magnitude is *motion*." WdL, I, pp. 340–341; Miller, pp. 331–332; TW, 5, p. 392.

CHAPTER THREE

1. WdL, I, p. 387; Miller, p. 375; TW, 5, p. 445.
2. It is important to note in reading Hegel's texts that he uses "Essence" in two distinct senses: to denote (1) a body of principles (a "logic") governing substructure/superstructure relationships; (2) those underlying properties of things that make them what they are. In the second sense, an essence is a substructure that is used to explain elements of a superstructure. In the first sense, "essence" is used to denote the relationship between the substructure and the superstructure.
3. It is perhaps helpful to see Hegel's relation to Kant as similar to the debate between what Michael Dummett calls the debate between realists and antirealists. Consider the statement "The world doubles in size every hour." The realist holds that the statement could be true, even though for obvious reasons we could never know it to be true; the antirealist, on the other hand, claims that the statement is meaningless, since we can have no possible idea about its truth value. Kant on this view is a realist; there might be certain truths about things in themselves, but we cannot know them (things in themselves might, for example, entertain causal relations with each other, but we have no warrant for applying the category of causality to them). Hegel's idealism is perhaps best understood as a kind of non-realism (to call Hegel an antirealist instead of an idealist is a bit too anachronistic, but it would not be far off the mark); he is concerned to deny the coherence of the realist position.
4. Michael Theunissen isolates four statements by Hegel that are the core of the "Doctrine of Essence" (*Sein und Schein: die kritische Funktion der Hegelschen Logik* [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978], p. 302).

(1) "Being is mere appearance" (WdL, II, p. 9; Miller, p. 395; TW, 6, p. 19); (2) "The truth of being is essence" (WdL, II, p. 3; Miller, p. 389; TW, 6, p. 13); (3) "Essence is the mere appearing [*das Scheinen*] of itself within itself" (WdL, II, p. 12; Miller, p. 398; TW, 6, p. 23); (4) "The mere appearing of essence in itself is *Reflection*" (WdL, II, p. 7; Miller, p. 394; TW, 6, p. 17). Theunissen draws a somewhat different reading of the interconnections of these four propositions than I do, but he is right to point out these four as giving the kernel of the Hegelian doctrine of Essence.

5. "Posit" is the translation of *Setzen*. It might perhaps be more felicitous to translate it as "generate" and even in some cases as "produce," but that would put me out of step with almost all translations of Hegel's works. I shall therefore stick with the more usual but more ponderous "posit."

6. See Robert Nozick's very interesting discussion of self-subsuming and self-reflexive explanations in his *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 115–137.

7. "Essence, as infinite return-into-self, is not immediate but negative simplicity; it is a movement through distinct moments, absolute self-mediation." WdL, II, p. 23; Miller, p. 408; TW, 6, pp. 35–36.

8. Thus Hegel says that essence "is being that is *in itself and for itself*; it is absolute *being-in-itself* in that it is indifferent to every determinateness of being, and otherness and relation to other have been completely integrated. But it is not only this being-in-itself; as mere being-in-itself it would be only the abstraction of pure essence; but it is equally essentially *being-for-self*; it is itself this negativity, the self-integrating of otherness and determinateness." WdL, II, p. 4; Miller, p. 390; TW, 6, p. 14. As being-in-itself, it has a determinateness on its own ("indifferent to every determinateness of being"); as being-for-self, it is self-relating, a feature that Hegel characterizes as negativity. It is the self-relating aspect that explains how it integrates "otherness and determinateness": it explains the determinateness of the other (the superstructure) and explains its determinateness in doing so or in the same way.

9. "Thus being or existence has not preserved itself as an other—for we are in the sphere of essence—and the immediate that is still distinguished from essence is not merely an unessential existence but the immediate that is *in and for itself* a nullity; it is only a *non-essence*, mere appearance." WdL, II, p. 9; Miller, p. 395; TW, 6, p. 19.

10. "In essence, being is non-being [*Nichtsein*]. Its intrinsic *nothingness* is the *negative nature of essence itself*. But the immediacy or indifference which this non-being contains is essence's own absolute being-in-itself . . . being has preserved itself in essence in so far as the latter in its infinite negativity has this *equation* with itself . . . the immediacy of the determinateness in mere appearance over against essence is consequently nothing other than essence's own immediacy; but the immediacy is not simply existent [*seiend*] but is the purely mediated or reflected immediacy that is mere appearance."

WdL, II, p. 11; Miller, p. 397; TW, 6, pp. 21–22. Hegel concludes that these moments of “mere appearance” are “thus the moments of essence itself. What we have here . . . is *mere appearance in itself, the mere appearance of essence itself.*” WdL, II, p. 11; Miller, pp. 397–398; TW, 6, p. 22.

11. WdL, II, p. 11; Miller, p. 397; TW, 6, p. 21.

12. *Schein* is a terribly difficult word to translate. Miller renders it as “illusory being”; Johnson and Struthers render it as “show” in their earlier (and very flawed) translation of the *Wissenschaft der Logik*. I prefer to render it as “mere appearance”; I thus attempt to catch the distinction of *Schein* and *Erscheinung* in the prefix “mere.” Unfortunately, Hegel uses *scheinen*, the verb form, in many of his sentences, and my use of “mere appearance” makes translation of that a bit awkward. Thus, Miller renders, for example, “Die Reflexion ist das Scheinen des Wesens in sich selbst” (WdL, II, p. 23; TW, 6, p. 35) as “Reflection is the showing of the illusory being of essence within essence itself.” (Miller, p. 409). I would render it as “Reflection is the mere appearing of essence within essence itself.” As any reader can see, neither of the two renderings is especially felicitous.

13. WdL, II, p. 13; Miller, p. 400; TW, 6, p. 24.

14. There is an alternative way of reading this passage, one suggested by Nozick’s discussion of why there must be something rather than nothing in *Philosophical Explanations*, pp. 121–127 (Nozick does not discuss this in terms of Hegel, but his discussion is relevant to Hegel’s ideas). If we imagine nothing as the natural state of the universe, say, by imagining a “very powerful force toward nothingness, one any other forces have to overcome” (p. 123), then if we imagine that “this force acts upon itself, it sucks nothingness into nothingness, producing something or, perhaps, everything, every possibility” (p. 123). Maybe Hegel is trying to suggest here just this: nothing as the natural state of the world negates itself and produces a world of essences and appearances. Why a world of essences and appearances, though? If this is indeed what Hegel is trying to say, then he should have begun the *Science of Logic* with “nothing” instead of “being,” showing how nothing produces out of itself the world of determinate entities. That he does not suggests that this is not the reading to attribute to Hegel. (On the other hand, it might be argued that the beginning is just as much a beginning with nothing as it is with being, since the two are said to be identical.)

15. WdL, II, p. 13; Miller, p. 400; TW, 6, pp. 24–25.

16. “But this coincidence [*Zusammenfallen*] is not a passing over of the negation into equality with self as into its otherness [*Anderssein*]: on the contrary, reflection is passing over as integrating of the passing over.” WdL, II, p. 14; Miller, p. 400; TW, 6, pp. 26–27.

17. This seems to be the argument of the section on “determining reflection” in the *Science of Logic*. See WdL, II, pp. 20–23; Miller, pp. 405–408; TW, 6, pp. 32–35.

18. This formulation is taken from Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*, p. 140.

19. WdL, II, p. 65; Miller, p. 446; TW, 6, p. 82. Hegel goes on to say in the passage cited that the principle means, "we must not stop at immediate existence [*Dasein*] or determinateness as such, but must go back from this into its ground, in which reflection it is an integrated being and is in and for itself."

20. *Encyclopedia*, §121.

21. WdL, II, p. 101; Miller, p. 479; TW, 6, p. 124.

22. "Existence [*Existenz*], then, is not to be taken here as a *predicate* or as a *determination* of essence, the proposition of which would run: essence exists, or *has* existence; on the contrary, essence has passed over into existence; existence is essence's absolute emptying of itself or self-alienation, nor has it remained behind on the further side of it." WdL, II, p. 105; Miller, p. 483; TW, 6, p. 128.

23. If nothing else, this sets Hegel stylistically apart from the practice of most contemporary philosophy, which is intent on stating what the theses under consideration are, what is wrong with them, and which ones will be defended. Hegel often does something like this, but even when he does, it is not always clear that this is exactly what he is doing.

24. WdL, II, p. 106; Miller, p. 484; TW, 6, p. 129.

25. The thing with its quantitative and qualitative makeup (*Beschaffenheit*) is one of the moments of the category of "the something" in the "Doctrine of Being." See WdL, I, p. 110–116; Miller, p. 122–129; TW, 5, pp. 131–139.

26. WdL, II, p. 105; Miller, p. 484; TW, 6, p. 129.

27. Hegel makes fun of the attempts in his own day to incorporate this conception of a thing in empirical explanation. Things were said to consist of various porous matters that intermingle in each other's pores; against the objection that this would make some of these "matters" be in the same place at the same time, the theorists replied (according to Hegel's account of them) with the claim that the "matters" were, after all, very small. That, as Hegel noted, really does not help at all.

28. Hegel says of this conception of the thing, "Mere appearance [*Schein*] is the same mediation, but its unstable moments have, in Appearance, the shape of immediate self-subsistence. On the other hand, the immediate self-subsistence which belongs to Existence [*Existenz*] is, on its part, reduced to a moment. Appearance is accordingly the unity of mere appearance and Existence." WdL, II, p. 123; Miller, p. 500; TW, 6, p. 149.

29. WdL, II, p. 127; Miller, p. 503; TW, 6, pp. 153–54.

30. WdL, II, p. 144; Miller, p. 518; TW, 6, p. 172.

31. "The oft-repeated statement, that the expression [*Äusserung*] of force and not the force itself admits of being known, must be rejected as groundless. Force is just that which expresses itself, and thus in the totality of expression conceived as law we at the same time know the force itself." *Encyclopedia*, §136, Zusatz 2.

32. See WdL, II, pp. 136–138; Miller, pp. 512–513; TW, 6, pp. 164–166.

33. The category of substance is meant as a reconstruction of Spinoza's notion of substance. Hegel dissents from Spinoza's idea that the substance of the world is to be identified with God. Such a conception denies, Hegel claims, that God is a person, since the category of substance is not adequate to describe the features of personality. Hegel argues this, among other places, in the *Encyclopedia*, §275, Zusatz.

34. This might just seem like a perverse conception of substance. Ernst Cassirer, for example, distinguishes substances from relations in his early book *Substance and Function*, trans. by W. C. Swabey (New York: Dover Publications, 1953), and argues that the major difference between classical and modern logic and metaphysics is the substitution of systems of relations (for example, functions) for substances. But by "substance" Cassirer understands what Hegel means by "thing and its properties." The substance of something on Hegel's view is not the stuff out of which it is made. It is the *unity* of the thing, the unity being understood as a relational series, a *Verhältnis*; as a stuff, it could manifest itself. One need not posit an underlying stuff to account for the unity of particular substances. His conception of substance, so Hegel thinks, avoids an appeal to something like the thing in itself and also avoids thereby immediately falling back into the dialectic of mere appearance.

35. WdL, II, p. 170; Miller, p. 542; TW, 6, p. 201.

36. WdL, II, p. 157; Miller, p. 530; TW, 6, p. 187.

37. WdL, II, p. 168; Miller, p. 540; TW, 6, p. 200. Hegel says of this, "It is an extremely important conception that the alterations of the monads are conceived of as actions in which passivity plays no part, as *manifestations* of themselves, and the principle of reflection-into-self or of *individuation* stands out as essential" but that "the conceptions concerning the distinction between the various finite monads and their relation to their absolute do not originate out of this being itself, or not in an absolute manner, but are the product of ratiocinative, dogmatic reflection and therefore have not achieved an inner coherence." WdL, II, pp. 168–169; Miller, p. 540; TW, 6, p. 200.

38. Hegel says that in causality, "when substance determines itself to *being-for-self* over against an *other*, or the absolute relation determines itself as real, then we have the *relation of causality*." WdL, II, p. 185; Miller, p. 554; TW, 6, p. 218. Hegel tries to make it clear that he believes in a plurality of substances posited by one substance when he claims that in "finite causality it is substances that are actively related to each other." WdL, II, p. 202; Miller, p. 569; TW, 6, p. 237.

39. Hegel is quite popularly taken to be a monist, but this popular understanding obscures, I think, the real way in which Hegel tried to steer a middle course between monism and pluralism. It is doubtful that Hegel would have thought of himself in terms of being a "monist." Indeed, his compatibilist program would seem to drive him away from such a view.

40. WdL, II, p. 192; Miller, p. 560; TW, 6, p. 226.

41. This involves some interpolation of ideas into Hegel's text. He says of the relationship of causality, "The form determination is also content determination; cause and effect, the two sides of the relation are, therefore, also *another content* . . . But this its form is the relationship of causality, which is a content identical in cause and effect, and consequently the different content is externally connected, on the one hand with the cause, and other hand with the effect; hence the content does not enter into the action and into the relation. . . . This external content is therefore devoid of any relationship, *an immediate existence*; or because it is, as content, the implicit identity of cause and effect, it too is an *immediate, simply affirmative identity*. . . . In it, the form determinations have their substrate, that is, their essential subsistence, and each has a particular subsistence." WdL II, pp. 194–195; Miller, p. 563; TW, 6, p. 229.

42. "This union of opposed determinations as *in a simply affirmative* substrate constitutes the *infinite regress* from cause to cause. The effect is the starting point; as such it has a cause, this in turn has a cause, and so on. Why has the cause a fresh cause? that is to say, why is the same side which was previously determined as *cause* now determined as *effect*, with a consequent demand for a fresh cause? For this reason, that the cause is a finite, a determinate in general; determined as *one* moment of form over against the effect, it has its determinateness or negation outside it; but for this very reason it is itself *finite*, has its *determinateness within it* and this is *positedness* or *effect*. This its identity is also posited, but it is a *third term*, the immediate substrate." WdL, II, pp. 196–197; Miller, p. 564; TW, 6, p. 231. (Hegel also thinks that this explains the infinity of causality.)

43. The final section of the "Doctrine of Essence" is that of "Reciprocal Causality" in which Hegel constructs a possible view of individual substances, each interacting with each other in a manner consistent with their individual natures to produce an overall system of regularities. Such a view is similar to Leibniz's, although Hegel does not explicitly make the comparison.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. "Spinoza puts substance at the head of his system, and defines it to be the unity of thought and extension, without demonstrating how he gets to this distinction, or how he traces it back to the unity of substance. . . . As immediately accepted by Spinoza without a previous mediation by dialectic, Substance, as the universal negative power, is as it were a dark shapeless abyss which engulfs all definite content as radically null, and produces from itself nothing that has a positive subsistence of its own." *Encyclopedia*, §151, Remark.

2. "With conception as such, therefore, we have entered the realm of *freedom*. Freedom belongs to conception as such because that identity which, as absolutely determined, constitutes the necessity of substance, is now also

integrated or is a positedness, and this positedness as self-related is simply that identity . . . the *original* substance is original in that it is only the *cause of itself*, and this is *substance raised to the freedom of conception as such*." WdL, II, pp. 218–219; Miller, p. 582; TW, 6, p. 251.

3. William and Martha Kneale make this charge. "For it was he [Kant] with his transcendentalism who began the production of the curious mixture of metaphysics and epistemology which was presented as logic by him and other idealists of the nineteenth century." William and Martha Kneale, *The Development of Logic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 355.

4. See Ignacio Angelelli, *Studies on Gottlob Frege and Traditional Philosophy* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1967).

5. See Wilfrid Sellars, "Toward a Theory of the Categories" in Wilfrid Sellars, *Studies in Philosophy and Its History* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1967), pp. 318–339.

6. See Angelelli, pp. 117–120.

7. Here I am translating *Begriff* as "concept," since Hegel seems to be using it in the ordinary sense.

8. "What now concerns the nature of the concept as such is that it is not in itself the abstract unity over and against the differentiatedness of reality but rather is already as concept the unity of differentiated determinatenesses and is therefore concrete totality. Thus the representations [*Vorstellungen*], person, blue, etc. are at first not to be called concepts but abstract-universal representations which first become concepts when it is demonstrated that they contain in them differentiated aspects in unity, because this unity which is determinate in itself constitutes the concept." TW, 13, p. 147 (*Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*).

9. "There cannot be any question of *demonstrating* for a word selected from the language of common life that in common life, too, one associates with it the same conception for which philosophy employs it; for common life has no conceptions, but only representations [*Vorstellungen*], and to recognize conception as such in what is otherwise a mere representation is philosophy itself." WdL, II, p. 357; Miller, p. 708; TW, 6, p. 406. This seems to be just false; ordinary life is full of particular conceptions. Hegel probably means that ordinary life has no developed philosophical theories about these conceptions. In ordinary life we use various terms without understanding that our usage of these terms—such as "force," "thing," "rights," and "justice"—depends on a set of background conceptions that give them their concrete sense. It is up to philosophy to construct theories that explain these conceptions.

10. "But every determinate conception is, of course, empty in so far as it does not contain the totality, but only a one-sided determinateness. Even when it has some other concrete content, for example, man, the state, animal, etc., it still remains an empty conception, since its determinateness is not the *principle* of its differences; a principle contains the beginning and the essential

nature of its development and realization; any other determinateness of the conception, however, is sterile." WdL, II, p. 250; Miller, pp. 609–610; TW, 6, p. 285. I take Hegel to mean by this that it is not enough to have specific conceptions of things; one should also have a theory that explains why such and such a conception of, for instance, the person is more rational than some other conception.

11. "But the universal of conceptions [*das Allgemeine des Begriffs*] is not merely something in common [*ein Gemeinschaftliches*] over and against a particular which has a subsistence for itself. It is, on the contrary, self-particularising (self-specifying) and with undimmed clearness remains with itself [*bei sich selbst Bleibende*] in its other. For the sake both of cognition and of our practical conduct, it is of the utmost importance that the true universal should not be confused with what is merely held in common." *Encyclopedia*, §163.

12. "By virtue of this original unity it follows, in the first place, that the first negative, or the *determination*, is not a limitation for the universal which, on the contrary, *maintains itself therein* and is positively identical with itself. . . . The universal, on the contrary, even when it posits itself in a determination, *remains* therein what it is. . . . But even so, it does not *merely* appear [*scheint*] in its other like the determination of reflection." WdL, II, p. 241–242; Miller, pp. 602–603; TW, 6, p. 276.

13. WdL, II, p. 262; Miller, p. 621; TW, 6, p. 299.

14. This seems to be Hegel's point when he says of the relation between particulars and universals, "the return of this side into the universal is twofold: *either through abstraction* which lets drop the particular and rises to the *higher and highest genus*, or *else through the individuality* to which the universal in the determinateness itself descends. Here is where the false path branches off and abstraction strays from the highway of the concept and forsakes the truth. Its higher and highest universal to which it raises itself is only the surface, which becomes ever more destitute of content; the individuality it despises is the profundity in which the concept seizes itself and is posited as concept." WdL, II, p. 260; Miller, p. 619; TW, 6, pp. 296–297.

15. "In this way, the individual is a qualitative *one* or a *this*. . . . Universality, when related to these individuals as indifferent ones—and related to them it must be because it is a moment of the concept of individuality—is merely their *common element*. . . . The lowest conception one can have of the universal in this connection with the individual is this external relation of it as merely a *common element*." WdL, II, p. 263; Miller, p. 621; TW, 6, p. 300.

16. "The individual, which in the sphere of reflection exists as a *this*, does not have the exclusive relation to another one which belongs to qualitative being-for-self. . . . The *this is*; it is *immediate*; but it is only this in so far as it is *pointed out*. The "pointing out" is the reflecting movement which collects itself inwardly and posits immediacy, but as a self-external immediacy." WdL, II, p. 263; Miller, p. 622; TW, 6, p. 300.

17. "Further, the individuals are not merely *existing* [*seiende*] individuals over and against one another; such plurality belongs to being; the *individuality*, in positing itself as determinate, posits itself not in an external difference but in the difference of the concept. It therefore excludes the *universal* from itself; yet since this is a moment of individuality, the universal is equally essentially related to it." WdL, II, p. 264; Miller, p. 622; TW, 6, p. 301. (With the word "*seiende*," Hegel is distinguishing the conception of the individual found in the "Doctrine of Being" from that of the one found in the "Doctrine of the Concept.")

18. WdL, II, p. 220; Miller, p. 583; TW, 6, p. 253. By this Hegel means that the "I" is characterized by the ability to form conceptions, to integrate itself and its experiences into an integrated whole. In his philosophy of mind, he will call this "idealization." See Chapter Six.

19. "But the *I* is, first, this pure self-related unity, and it is so not immediately but only as making abstraction from all determinateness and content and withdrawing into the freedom of unrestricted equality with itself. As such it is *universality*; a unity that is unity with itself only through its *negative* attitude, which appears as a process of abstraction, and that consequently contains all determinedness in it." WdL, II, p. 220; Miller, p. 583; TW, 6, p. 253.

20. "Secondly, the *I* as self-related negativity is no less immediately *individuality* or is *absolutely determined*, opposing itself to all that is other and excluding it—*individual personality*. This absolute *universality* which is also immediately an absolute *individualization*, and an absolutely determined being, which is a pure positedness and is this *absolutely determined* being only through its unity with the *positedness*, this constitutes the nature of the *I* as well as of the concept; neither the one nor the other can be truly comprehended unless the two indicated moments are grasped at the same time both in their abstraction and also in their perfect unity." WdL, II, p. 221; Miller, p. 583; TW, 6, p. 253.

21. "When one speaks in the ordinary way of the *understanding possessed by the I*, one understands thereby a *faculty* or *property* which stands in the same relation to the *I* as the property of a thing does to the *thing* itself, that is, to an indeterminate substrate that is not the genuine ground and the determinant of its property. . . . Now Kant went beyond this external relation of the understanding, as the faculty of concepts and of the concept itself, to the *I*. It is one of the profoundest and truest insights to be found in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that the *unity* which constitutes the nature of the *concept* is recognized as the *original synthetic* unity of *apperception*, as unity of the *I think*, or of self-consciousness." WdL, II, p. 221; Miller, p. 584; TW, 6, p. 254.

22. Hegel's rejection of the idea of there being an intermediary between the subject and world explains three other things about Hegel's text that might otherwise appear puzzling. First, it is because Hegel sees Kant adhering to this picture that he refers to Kant as an empiricist. Second, it is Hegel's

rejection of this picture that underlies the complete disregard for epistemology in his system. Third, it is the reason why Hegel refers to the third book of the *Science of Logic* as the “subjective logic”: since the subject is defined by its doings, which are conceptual thinkings, and conceptual thinkings are constituted by logic, the “logic” of subjectivity is the “logic of logic” and not in any way a psychology of logic. See WdL, II, p. 223; Miller, p. 586; TW, 6, p. 256.

23. This thesis is argued by Angelelli, *Studies on Gottlob Frege and Traditional Philosophy*, pp. 107–125.

24. Hegel notes that “Even if we are to see in logical forms nothing more than formal functions of thought, they would for that very reason be worthy of investigation to ascertain how far, on their own account, they correspond to the *truth*. . . . It is an infinite merit of Aristotle, one that must fill us with the highest admiration for the powers of that genius, that he was the first to undertake this description. It is necessary however to go further and to ascertain both the systematic connection of these forms and their value.” WdL, II, p. 234; Miller, p. 595; TW, 6, p. 269.

25. Hegel says, for instance, that a logic should derive its principles systematically, and “A logic which does not perform this task can at most claim the value of a descriptive natural history of the phenomena of thinking just as they occur.” WdL, II, p. 234; Miller, p. 595; TW, 6, p. 269.

26. Hegel complains about the way in which classifications of concepts are introduced with no apparent systematic reason: “In the customary treatment of logic hitherto, various *classifications* and *species* of concepts occur. We are at once struck by the inconsequential way in which the species of concepts are introduced: *there are*, in respect of quantity, quality, etc., the following concepts. *There are*, expresses no other justification than that we *find* such species already to hand and they present themselves *empirically*. In this way, we obtain an *empirical logic*—an odd science this, an *irrational* cognition of the *rational*.” WdL, II, p. 253; Miller, p. 613; TW, 6, p. 289. Of course, if Hegel were not so wedded to the way in which his time organized logic textbooks, he might not have been tempted to think that one needed a derivation of the types of concepts at all. But this is hardly something for which he can be faulted.

27. The passage that must have struck Hegel so is the footnote in §16 of the “Transcendental Deduction”—B134 note—in which Kant notes that in order to be able to think of general concepts such as redness, we must also be able to think of at least possible individuals in which these general concepts are instanced—at least that is one way of taking Kant’s statement in that note that “A representation which is to be thought as common to *different* representations is regarded as belonging to such as have, in addition to it, also something *different*. Consequently it must previously be thought in synthetic unity with other (though, it may be, only possible) representations, before I can think in it the analytic unity of consciousness, which makes it a *conceptus*

communis." Kant's concluding in the next sentence that "The synthetic unity of apperception is therefore that highest point, to which we must ascribe all employment of the understanding, even the whole of logic, and conformably therewith, transcendental philosophy" would be the kind of impulse that would undergird Hegel's belief that a project of deducing the basic types of concepts, judgments, and syllogisms out of a single set of principles is both feasible and desirable. Hegel seems to take Kant as coming unwittingly to the conclusion that it is the conditions of conceptual thought itself—of the synthetic unity of apperception—that give us the necessity of individuals. Of course, Hegel attempts to do this out of a theory of the conditions of rational thought and not out of a theory of consciousness, as Kant did. (The translation of Kant's text is taken from the Norman Kemp Smith translation, St. Martin's Press.)

28. WdL, II, p. 267; Miller, p. 625; TW, p. 304.

29. This seems to be the point of Hegel's remark that "For example, 'Aristotle died at the age of 73, in the fourth year of the 115th Olympiad,' is a mere sentence, not a judgment. It would partake of the nature of a judgment only if doubt had been thrown on one of the circumstances, the date of the death, or the age of that philosopher, and the given figures had been asserted on the strength of some reason or other." WdL, II, p. 267; Miller, p. 626; TW, 6, p. 305. Hegel conflates in this passage reasons for believing that an asserted sentence has a truth value with the contextual reasons one might have for asserting it. Nonetheless, the distinction of sentence and asserted sentence seems to capture the point that Hegel is making about sentences and judgments here. Hegel is again not completely consistent in his usage here; he says, for example, that judgments of reflection, in distinction from judgments of existence, are "sentences" (WdL, II, p. 301; Miller, p. 657; TW, 6, p. 344), thus making the distinction that he himself made rather a murky one.

30. "As regards the further determination of the subject and predicate, we have remarked that it is really in the judgment first that they have to receive their determination." WdL, II, p. 268; Miller, p. 627; TW, 6, p. 306. Hegel also says of the judgment, "It contains, therefore, first, the two self-subsistents which are called subject and predicate. What each is cannot yet really be said; they are still indeterminate, for it is only through the judgment that they are to be determined." WdL, II, p. 265; Miller, p. 623; TW, 6, p. 302. Hegel says of sentences, "In the *grammatical* sense, that subjective relationship in which one starts from the indifferent externality of the subject and predicate has its complete validity; for it is *words* that are here externally combined." WdL, II, p. 267; Miller, p. 626; TW, 6, p. 305.

31. WdL, II, p. 265; Miller, p. 623; TW, 6, p. 302. Hegel also notes that a judgment "requires that the predicate be related to the subject as one conceptual determination to another, and therefore as a universal to a particular or individual." WdL, II, p. 267; Miller, p. 626; TW, 6, p. 305.

32. Thus, Hegel says, "Now in so far as the subject is the self-subsistent,

this identity has the relationship that the predicate does not possess a self-subsistence of its own, but has its subsistence only in the subject; it *inheres* in the subject. . . . But on the other hand, the predicate, too, is a self-subsistent universality and the subject, conversely, only a determination of it. Looked at this way, the predicate *subsumes* the subject; individuality and particularity are not for themselves, but have their essence and substance in the universal." WdL, II, p. 270; Miller, pp. 628–629; TW, 6, p. 270.

33. For a good exposition and criticism of Hegel's typology of judgments and syllogisms, see especially J. N. Findlay. *Hegel: A Re-examination* (New York: Collier Books, 1962). See also J. M. E. McTaggart, *A Commentary on Hegel's Logic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910).

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Hegel distinguishes this sense of "objectivity" from the sense of objectivity as something about which there can be true and false statements made by using the term *Objektivität* to cover the former sense instead of using the term *Gegenständlichkeit*. An *Objekt* is a system of entities; a *Gegenstand* is an object in the more ordinary sense, like a table or chair (*Gegenstand* is the term used as "object" in the "Doctrine of Essence").

2. See M. J. Petry, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970), vols. I–III.

3. See *Encyclopedia* §193.

4. WdL, II, p. 374; Miller, p. 724; TW, 6, p. 426.

5. "That identical or ideal aspect of individuality is, on account of the relation to externality, an *ought-to-be*; it is that unity of the concept, absolutely determined and self-determining, to which that external reality does not correspond, and therefore gets no further than a *striving* towards it." WdL, II, p. 375; Miller, p. 724; TW, 6, p. 426.

6. "This uniformity [*Gleichförmigkeit*] is indeed a *rule*, but not a *law*. Only free mechanism has a *law*, the spontaneous determination of pure individuality or of the concept existing for itself." WdL, II, p. 375; Miller, p. 725; TW, 6, p. 427. Hegel also speaks of what he calls "Chemism" in his treatment of such systems-concepts. He believes that it would be possible for some systems to have elements that have an inherent nonmechanical attraction to each other. This is based on his understanding of some of the science of his day, but more prominently on Goethe's conception of elective affinities (he takes, for instance, sexuality to be a form of chemism). Hegel seems to be asking how it would be possible to give an account of things in which Goethe's conception was true. The section does not seem necessary to his argument even though it fits systemically well into his system: the elements of a mechanical system are indifferent to each other (mirroring thus the form of the "Doctrine of Being"), whereas the elements of chemism are reflected into

each other (mirroring thus the form of the "Doctrine of Essence").

7. "If mechanism and purposiveness stand opposed to one another, they cannot for that very reason be taken as *indifferent* concepts, each of which is correct on its own account, possessing as much validity as the other, the only question being where one or the other may be applied. This equal validity of both rests merely on the fact that they *are*, that is to say, that we *have* them both. But since they are opposed, the necessary preliminary question is, which of the two is the true one; and the higher and real question is, *whether their truth is not a third concept, or whether one of them is the truth of the other.*" WdL, II, p. 384; Miller, p. 734; TW, 6, p. 437.

8. WdL, II, p. 384; Miller, p. 734; TW, 6, p. 437.

9. The three parts of his treatment—subjective end, means, and realized end—correspond to the three basic divisions of the *Science of Logic*. The part on subjective ends corresponds to the "Doctrine of Being": the terms of the argument are not logically related, they are indifferent, external to each other. The part on means corresponds to the "Doctrine of Essence," particularly to the logic of reflection in it, and the part on the realized end corresponds to the "Doctrine of the Concept," since the terms of the syllogism are seen to be logically implying the other.

10. This distinction of true teleological from quasi-teleological explanations is taken from Georg Henrik von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1971), see pp. 58–60.

11. WdL, II, p. 402; Miller, p. 750; TW, 6, p. 458.

12. "Its self-repellent negativity is, therefore, one whose moments, being determinations only of the concept itself, also have the form of objective indifference to one another." WdL, II, p. 392; Miller, p. 741; TW, 6, p. 446.

13. "Thus the original *inner* externality of the concept through which it is self-repellant unity, the end and the striving of the end towards objectification, is the immediate positing or presupposition of an external object; the *self-determination* is also the determination of an *external object* not determined by the concept; and conversely, the latter determination is self-determination, that is, externality integrated and *posited as internal*—or the *certainty of the unessentiality* of the external object." WdL, II, p. 405; Miller, p. 753; TW, 6, p. 460.

14. "First we saw subjectivity, the concept's *being-for-self*, pass over into its *in-itself*, *objectivity*, to be followed by the reappearance in the latter of the negativity of the concept's being-for-self; in that negativity the concept has determined itself in such a manner that its *particularity* is an *external objectivity*, or it has determined itself as a simple concrete unity whose externality is its self-determination." WdL, II, p. 405; Miller, p. 753; TW, 6, p. 456.

15. WdL, II, p. 398; Miller, p. 746; TW, 6, p. 452.

16. This simplifies things somewhat. Wayne Davis has pointed out to me that I might do things that I thought were necessary parts of something that was sufficient but not necessary to something else. For example, I might

buy a lottery ticket in order to get rich. Acquiring the ticket is a necessary condition of my winning the lottery; alas, it is not sufficient. Winning the lottery is a sufficient condition of my becoming rich, but it is not a necessary condition (I might inherit the money).

17. There are other teleological syllogisms that do not presuppose causal generalizations in the same way. I might want to write a valid will. I note that in order to write a valid will in my jurisdiction, I must have it signed by three witnesses. The condition of the will's being signed by three witnesses is not a causal condition. I must rely on some set of generalizations in order to know how to write a valid will, but these need not be causal generalizations.

18. WdL, II, p. 398; Miller, p. 746; TW, 6, p. 452.

19. This forms the outline for Hegel's philosophy of mind: "For the cognition already contained in the simple *logical* Idea is only the concept of cognition thought *by us*, not cognition existing on its own account, not actual mind but merely its possibility." *Encyclopedia*, §381, Zusatz.

20. "The cognizing subject, through the determinateness of its concept, namely abstract being-for-self, relates itself, it is true, to an external world, but it does so in the absolute self-certainty of itself, in order to raise its in-itself reality, this formal truth, into real truth. It possesses in its concept the *entire essentiality* of the objective world; its process consists in positing for itself the concrete content of that world as identical with the *concept*, and conversely, in positing the latter as identical with objectivity." WdL, II, p. 438; Miller, p. 782; TW, 6, p. 497. The phrase "in absolute self-certainty" I take to be indicative of Hegel's view that only portions of the "external world" permit such *a priori* treatment. Not all of the external world permits such treatment, and thus treatment of that part of the world is not done in such "self-certainty."

21. In Hegel's sense of "true," it is also "more true" than the empirical world. Empirical circles and triangles are imperfect and pass away, whereas the pure circles and triangles of geometry are eternal and free of change.

22. "It is the relation of the conceptual judgment [*Verhältnis des Begriffsurteils*] which showed itself to be the formal judgment of truth; in it, namely, the predicate is not merely the objectivity of the concept, but the relating comparison of the concept of the subject-matter [*Sache*] with its actuality." WdL, II, p. 440; Miller, p. 784; TW, 6, p. 499.

23. Kant claimed in his lectures on logic: "All definitions are either analytic or synthetic—the former are definitions of a given [*gegebenen*] concept, the latter are definitions of a constructed [*gemachten*] concept." Immanuel Kant, *Logik*, in Immanuel Kant, *Werke*, ed. by Wilhelm Weischedel (Wiesbaden: Insel Verlag, 1958), vol. II, sec. 100, p. 572.

24. Hegel claims that not only arithmetic but also what he calls "analysis"—the "science of discrete magnitude"—is analytic. WdL, II, p. 445; Miller, p. 789; TW, 6, p. 505.

25. "The *proof* of a theorem of this kind—and it would require a proof

if it were a synthetic proposition—would consist merely in the operation of counting on from 5 to a further 7 ones and in discerning the agreement of the result of this counting with what is otherwise called 12, and which again is nothing else but just that process of counting up to a defined limit." WdL, II, pp. 447–448; Miller, p. 791; TW, 6, p. 507.

26. WdL, II, p. 447; Miller, p. 791; TW, 6, p. 507.

27. "Analytic cognition is the first premiss of the whole syllogism—the *immediate* relation of the concept to the object; *identity*, therefore, is the determination which it recognizes as its own, and analytic cognition is merely the *apprehension* [*das Auffassen*] of what *is*. Synthetic cognition aims at the *comprehension* [*das Begreifen*] of what *is*, that is, at grasping the multiplicity of determinations in their unity." WdL, II, p. 450; Miller, pp. 793–794; TW, 6, p. 511.

28. "For since individuality, which is determined in and for itself, lies outside the conceptual determination peculiar to synthetic cognition there is no principle available for determining which sides of the subject matter are to be regarded as belonging to its conceptual determination and which merely to the external reality." WdL, II, p. 453; Miller, p. 796; TW, 6, pp. 513–514.

29. See M. J. Petry, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1970), I: 309–310.

30. "Axioms . . . are commonly but incorrectly taken as absolute firsts, as though in and for themselves they required no proof. Were this in fact the case, they would be mere tautologies, as it is only in abstract identity that no difference is present, and therefore no mediation required. If, however, axioms are more than tautologies, they are *propositions* from some *other science*, since for the science they serve as axioms they are meant to be presuppositions. Hence they are, strictly speaking, *theorems*, and theorems taken mostly from logic." WdL, II, p. 466; Miller, p. 808; TW, 6, p. 529.

31. "Axioms, therefore, considered in and for themselves, require proof as much as definitions and divisions, and the only reason they are not made into theorems is that, as relatively first for a certain standpoint, they are assumed as presuppositions." WdL, II, p. 466; Miller, p. 808; TW, 6, p. 529.

32. "Thus, algebraical definitions of curved lines are theorems in the method of geometry. . . . The arbitrariness of the choice of either method is due to both alike starting from an external presupposition. So far as the nature of the concept is concerned, analysis is prior, since it has to raise the given material with its empirical concreteness into the form of general abstractions, which may then be employed in the beginning of the synthetic method as definitions." *Encyclopedia*, §231.

33. WdL, II, p. 474; Miller, p. 815; TW, 6, p. 537.

34. For a good treatment of the issues involved in rational mechanics and where it stood in the science of its day, see C. Truesdell, "A Program Toward Rediscovering the Rational Mechanics of the Age of Reason," in C. Truesdell, *Essays in the History of Mechanics* (Berlin: Springer Verlag, 1968),

pp. 85–137.

35. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 134.

36. Gerd Buchdahl gives a reading of Hegel's philosophy of science along these lines. See Gerd Buchdahl, "Hegel's Philosophy of Nature and the Structure of Science," reprinted in Michael Inwood, ed., *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 110–136.

37. "One is expected to admit that space exists, that there are plants, animals, etc., and it is not the business of geometry, botany, etc. to demonstrate the necessity of the objects in question. This very circumstance makes the synthetic method as little suitable for cognition as the analytic method. Philosophy has above all to justify the necessity of its objects." *Encyclopedia*, §229, Remark. Cognition cannot supply this kind of justification since it is not concerned with the possibility of things but only with what follows from accepted premises, how data fits in with a pattern of accepted theory or even with the change of theories themselves. Because cognition cannot demonstrate its own possibility, it is deficient in Hegel's teleology of explanation: "In synthetic cognition, therefore, the Idea attains its end only to the extent that the *concept* becomes *for the concept* according to its *moments of identity and real determinations*, or of *universality and particular differences*—further also as an *identity* that is the *connexion and dependence* of the diverse elements. But this object [*Gegenstand*] of the concept is not adequate [*angemessen*] to it; for the concept does not come to be the *unity of itself with itself in its object or its reality*; in necessity its identity is for it; but in this identity the necessity is not itself the *determinateness*, but appears as a matter external to the identity, that is, as a matter not determined by the concept, a matter, therefore, in which the concept does not cognize itself. Thus in general the concept is not for itself, is not at the same time determined in and for itself according to its unity. Hence in this cognition the Idea still falls short of truth on account of the inadequacy of the object to the subjective concept." WdL, II, pp. 476–477; Miller, p. 817; TW, 6, p. 540.

38. "Another way of regarding this defect is that the *practical* Idea still lacks the moment of the *theoretical* Idea . . . cognition knows itself only as apprehension, as the *indeterminate* identity for itself of the concept with itself; the filling, that is, the objectivity that is determined in and for itself, is for it a *given*, and the *truly existent* [*das wahrhaft Seiende*] is the actuality there before it independently of subjective positing. For the practical Idea, on the contrary, this actuality, which at the same time confronts it as an insuperable limitation, ranks as something intrinsically worthless [*das an und für sich Nichtige*] that must first receive its true determination and sole worth through the ends of the good." WdL, II, p. 480; Miller, p. 821; TW, 6, p. 545.

39. This is one way of taking several things that Hegel says. "The Idea of the good can therefore find its supplementation [*Ergänzung*] only in the Idea of the true." WdL, II, p. 481; Miller, p. 821; TW, 6, p. 545. He then follows that with: "But it makes this transition through itself. In the syllogism

of action, the one premiss is the *immediate relation of the good end to actuality* which it seizes on, and in the second premiss directs it as an external *means* against external actuality. For the subjective concept the good is the objective (*das Objektive*).” WdL, II, p. 481; Miller, p. 821; TW, 6, p. 545. Hegel seems to be arguing that the good can only be represented as a feature of the world as a system (as something objective, in Hegel’s sense of *das Objektive*).

40. “so similarly in the syllogism of the good, the second premise is immediately already present in itself in the first.” WdL, II, p. 479; Miller, p. 822; TW, 6, p. 546.

41. “In this process the general presupposition is integrated, namely the determination of the good as a merely subjective end limited in respect of content, the necessity of realizing it by subjective activity, and this activity itself. . . . With this, the Idea of the concept that is determined in and for itself is posited as being no longer merely in the active subject but as equally an immediate actuality; and conversely, this actuality is posited, as it is in cognition, as an objectivity possessing a true being.” WdL, II, p. 483; Miller, p. 823; TW, 6, p. 548.

42. “Accordingly in this result *cognition* is restored and united with the practical Idea; the actuality found as given is at the same time determined as the realized absolute end; but whereas in questing cognition this actuality appeared merely as an objective world without the subjectivity of the concept, here it appears as an objective world whose inner ground and actual subsistence is the concept. This is the absolute Idea.” WdL, II, p. 483; Miller, p. 823; TW, 6, p. 548.

43. WdL, II, p. 485; Miller, p. 825; TW, 6, p. 550.

44. “Thus what constitutes the method are determinations of the concept itself and their relations, which we have now to consider in their significance as determinations of the method.” WdL, II, p. 487; Miller, p. 827; TW, 6, p. 551.

45. Hegel does not use the terms “progressive,” “regressive,” and “architectonic.” The terms are Kant’s. Kant distinguishes a progressive, synthetic method from an analytic, regressive method in his work; the *Critique of Pure Reason* follows, Kant says, a progressive, synthetic method. See *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. by Peter G. Lucas (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), pp. 4, 5n. I am imputing these terms to Hegel on the basis of his claim: “It is in this manner that each step of the *advance* in the process of further determination, while getting further away from the indeterminate beginning is also *getting back nearer* to it, and that therefore, what at first sight may appear to be different, the *backwards going grounding* [*das rückwärts gehende Begründung*] of the beginning, and the *forward going determining* [*vorwärts gehende Weiterbestimmen*] of it, coincide and are the same.” WdL, II, p. 503; Miller, p. 841; TW, 6, p. 570.

46. “This is what Plato demanded of cognition, that it should *consider things in and for themselves* . . . should keep before it solely the things them-

selves and bring before consciousness what is immanent in them. The method of absolute cognition is to this extent *analytic*." WdL, II, p. 491; Miller, p. 830; TW, 6, p. 537.

47. "But the method is not less *synthetic*, since its subject matter, determined immediately as a *simple universal*, by virtue of the determinateness which it possesses in its very immediacy and universality, exhibits itself as an other." WdL, II, p. 491; Miller, p. 830; TW, 6, p. 537.

48. Hegel characterizes what I have called the small scale architectonic in the following way: "The abstract form of the advance is, in being, an *other* and *passing over* into an other; in essence, it is a *merely appearing in an opposite* [*Scheinen in dem Entgegengesetzten*]; in the *concept*, it is the distinction of the *individual* from the *universal* which as such is *continuous* with that which is differentiated from it and is *identical* with it." *Encyclopedia*, §240.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Findlay says of Hegel's idealism: "It is a teleological or quasi-teleological principle, according to which things must be seen as if existing on account of, or as if tending towards, certain consummating experiences, experiences where there will cease to be a barrier between the self and other persons, or between the thinking mind and the world confronting it." J. N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-examination* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 356. Again: "Spirit, the principle of unity and universality, can only *fully* understand the world by regarding that world as being no more than the material for its own activity, as being opaque to such activity merely to the extent that such opacity is a necessary condition of the process of removing it, of rendering the world transparent. . . . What reason can we have for embracing this view? We may at least give it a provisional justification by holding it to be involved in all our rational procedures. . . . To proceed in this way is certainly to proceed as an Hegelian Idealist, to treat the world as if its 'truth' lay in self-conscious Spirit." *Ibid.*, p. 54.

2. "We must designate *ideality* as the differentiating determinateness of the conception of mind, that is, the integration of the Idea's otherness [*Aufheben des Andersseins der Idee*] to a *moment*, the process of returning—and the accomplished return—into itself out of its other." *Encyclopedia*, §381, Zusatz.

3. "This integration of externality which belongs to the conception of mind is what we have called the ideality of mind. Every activity of mind is nothing but different manners of leading back [*Zurückführung*] what is external to the inwardness which mind itself is, and it is only by this leading back, by this idealization or assimilation, of what is external that it becomes and is mind." *Encyclopedia*, §381, Zusatz.

4. This is how various texts concerning the self-reference of mind to

itself and to its various states and moments may be understood. Representative of such texts are, for example, "Mind is not something inert but, on the contrary, something absolutely restless, pure activity, the negating or ideality of every fixed category of the understanding; not abstractly simple but in its simplicity, at the same time a distinguishing of itself from itself . . . it is not . . . a soul-thing only externally connected with the body, but is inwardly bound to the latter by the unity of the conception as such." *Encyclopedia*, §378, Zusatz: "The substance of mind is freedom, i.e., the absence of dependence on an other, the relating of self to self. Mind is the actualized concept which is for itself and has itself for object. Its truth and freedom alike consist in this unity of concept and objectivity present within it." *Encyclopedia*, §382, Zusatz.

5. "The determinateness of mind is therefore *manifestation*. The mind is not some one determinateness or content, whose expression [*Äußerung*] or externality [*Äußerlichkeit*] is only a differentiated form; it does not reveal *something* but its determinateness and content is this revelation itself." *Encyclopedia*, §383.

6. Hegel makes this point in a variety of places, and it is one of his best-known dictums. That he intends it to apply generally to the philosophy of mind is evidenced by his discussing it in the opening remarks of his philosophy of mind: "Thus, for example, the people and the time which were molded by the activity of Alexander and Caesar as *their* object, on their own part, qualified themselves for the deeds to be performed by these individuals; and it is no less true that the time created these men as that it was created by them; they were as much the instruments of the mind or spirit of their time and their people, as conversely, their people served these heroes as an instrument for the accomplishment of their deeds." *Encyclopedia*, §381, Zusatz.

7. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp. 355–363; TW, 3, pp. 431–441.

8. "But mind is not satisfied, as *finite* mind, with transposing things by its own ideational [*vorstellende*] activity into its own interior space and thus stripping them of their externality in a manner which is still external; on the contrary, as *religious* consciousness, it pierces through the seemingly [*scheinbar*] absolute independence of things to the one, infinite power of God operative in them and holding all together; and as *philosophical* thinking, it consummates this idealization of things by discerning the specific mode in which the eternal Idea forming their common principle is represented in them." *Encyclopedia*, §381, Zusatz.

9. "The substance of mind is freedom, i.e., the absence of dependence on an other, the relating of self to self." *Encyclopedia*, §382, Zusatz. Also: "This power over every content present in it forms the basis of the freedom of mind." *Ibid.*

10. "Mind can step out its abstract, universality existing for-itself, out of its simple self-relation, can posit within itself a determinate, actual difference, something other than the simple 'I', and hence a negative; and this relation to the Other is, for mind, not merely possible but necessary, because

it is through the Other and by the integration of it, that mind comes to authenticate itself and to be in fact what it ought to be according its conception, namely, the ideality of the external, the Idea which returns to itself out of its otherness; or, expressed more abstractly, the self-differentiating universal which in its difference is at home with itself and for itself." *Encyclopedia*, §383, Zusatz.

11. "Psychology studies the faculties or universal types of activities [*Tätigkeitsweisen*] of mind as such—intuition [*Anschauung*], representing [*Vorstellen*], remembering, desiring, etc.—in part without the content which in appearance is found in empirical representing, in thinking and also in willing and desiring, and in part without the forms found in the soul as a determination of nature or in consciousness as an object present at hand to it. . . . The content which is elevated to intuitions is its sensations; it is its intuitions which are transformed into representations, its representations which are transformed into thoughts." *Encyclopedia*, §440.

12. Hegel's only extended and unitary treatment of philosophical psychology comes in the *Encyclopedia*, which was intended only to be an outline of his whole system. Hegel himself recognized the brevity of the arguments in a remark made in the *Philosophy of Right*: "These premises I have expounded in my *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* and I hope by and by to be able to elaborate them still further. There is all the more need for me by so doing to make my contribution to what I hope is the deeper knowledge of the nature of mind in that, as I have said in the *Encyclopedia*, scarcely any philosophical science is so neglected and so ill off as the theory of mind, usually called 'psychology'." *Philosophy of Right*, §4, p. 21; TW, 7, pp. 48–49. (Hegel seems to be referring to §444 of the *Encyclopedia*.) Hegel did lecture on the topic, and the various additional remarks (*Zusätze*) attached to the paragraphs in the *Encyclopedia* by his students give us some idea of how Hegel intended the final product to be. Had Hegel not died so suddenly, he would have no doubt worked up his lecture notes into a more detailed treatment of the topic.

13. "The books of Aristotle on the soul, along with his discussions of its special aspects and states, are for this reason still by far the most admirable, perhaps even the sole, work of speculative interest on this topic. The main aim of a philosophy of mind can only be to reintroduce the conception as such into the cognition of mind, and so reinterpret the lesson of those Aristotelian books." *Encyclopedia*, §378.

14. Hegel repeatedly acknowledges his debt to Kant in his philosophical psychology. For example, "Psychology, like logic, is one of those sciences which in modern times have yet derived least profit from the more general mental culture and the deeper conception of reason. It is still extremely ill off. The turn which the Kantian philosophy has taken has given it greater importance." *Encyclopedia*, §444.

15. "The activity of mind has, therefore, no other aim than, by the integration of the merely apparent [*scheinbaren*] self-externality of the in itself

rational Object, to refute even the mere appearance of the object's externality to mind." *Encyclopedia*, §447, Zusatz. See also §381, Zusatz.

16. It is unclear if Hegel needs such an argument, if one takes his claims about what he has done in the *Logic* at face value. If the language of cognition presupposes a conceptual map of the world (the Idea) in which the subjective/objective dualism is overcome, then why is an additional epistemological proof required? It is also of course true that both versions of Hegel's phenomenology—both the exuberant *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the more restrained *Encyclopedia* version of it — cover more ground than epistemology (although the *Encyclopedia* version is restricted for the most part to this, the exception being the treatment of mastership and slavery in it).

17. "But the truly philosophical grasp of these forms just consists in comprehending the rational connection between them, in recognizing them as stages in the organic development of intelligence." *Encyclopedia*, §451, Zusatz.

18. "Therefore, intelligence integrates the simplicity of sensation, determines the sensed as negative towards it, and thus separates itself from it, yet at the same time posits it in its separatedness as its own. Only by this dual activity of removing and restoring the unity between myself and the other do I come to apprehend the content of sensation. . . . Accordingly, the activity of intuition produces to begin with simply a shifting of sensation away from us, a transformation of what is sensed into an Object existing outside of us. The content of sensation is not altered by this attention; on the contrary, it is here still one and the same thing in mind and in the external object, so that mind here has not as yet a content peculiar to itself which it could compare with the content of intuition. Consequently, what intuition brings about is merely the transformation of the form of internality into that of externality." *Encyclopedia*, §448, Zusatz.

19. "Intelligence thus determines the content of sensation as something that is existing external to it, projects it into time and space, which are the forms in which it is intuitive." *Encyclopedia*, §448.

20. "But when we said that what is sensed receives from the intuiting mind the form of the spatial and temporal, this statement must not be understood to mean that space and time are only subjective forms. This is what Kant wanted to make them. But things are in truth themselves spatial and temporal; this double form of asunderness is not one-sidedly given to them by our intuition, but has been originally imparted to them by the intrinsically infinite mind, by the creative eternal Idea . . . the supposition of subjective idealism that we receive only the *subjective* results of our determining activity and not the object's own determinations is completely refuted." *Encyclopedia*, §448, Zusatz.

21. "However, the answer to those who stupidly attach quite extraordinary importance to the question as to the *reality* of space and time, is that space and time are extremely meagre and superficial determinations, con-

sequently, that things obtain very little from these forms and the loss of them, were this in some way possible, would therefore amount to very little." *Encyclopedia*, §448, Zusatz.

22. "If the will, that is, the *in itself* existing unity of universality and determinateness, is to satisfy itself, that is, be *for itself*, then the conformity [*Angemessenheit*] of its inner determination and its existence *ought* to be posited through it." *Encyclopedia*, §473.

23. This is clear when in the remark to §469 Hegel gives an overview of the argumentative development of the notion of moral psychology: "It belongs to the Idea of freedom that the will should make its conception, which is *freedom itself*, its content or aim. . . . But the will achieves this aim only by ridding itself of its individuality, by developing its initially only implicit [*an sich seiende*] universality into a content that is universal in and for itself." *Encyclopedia*, §469, Zusatz.

24. Unlike sensations, they also have no location in our auditory, visual, or somatic fields. Hegel does not make this point, but Wayne Davis pointed this out to me as an additional point in Hegel's favor.

25. Hegel does not take up the question of whether the moral quality of some actions in fact depends on there being the right feeling present. Much moral action is possible only if there is the right type of motivation. To take a non-Hegelian example: I might do something for you because you are my friend. Let us suppose that what I did (Θ) is what we would all recognize as the kind of things that we expect friends to do for each other. Indeed, if I did not do this for you but instead ignored you, I would be said to be a reprehensible person, since friends do not ignore each other in that way. Now, to be said to have done this for you *because* you are my friend presupposes a certain type of motivation. If I do it because I wish to become famous or because I wish others to note what a good person I am (how I help my friends in need), I have not done it because you were my friend. Only if I am motivated out of concern for *you as my friend* does my act have the moral significance of "acting for my friend." If I am motivated to do Θ out of some other reason (acting for the sake of being admired by others), then my act has no moral significance at all or at least has a different moral significance. If I lack the requisite feeling—caring for you—then my action is not necessarily moral. Hegel's real concern is to show that there need be no opposition between the rationality of the practical feelings and rationality in general. For him, the real question seems to be, "Ought one do Θ for one's friends?" If the answer to that is affirmative, then it shows the "rationality" of having that kind of *particular* concern for *that* friend.

26. "All these feelings have no content *immanent* in them, belonging to their own peculiar nature; the content enters into them from outside." *Encyclopedia*, §472, Zusatz.

27. "It [practical mind] is thus practical feeling. Since it is in itself a subjectivity simply identical with reason, it has in that no doubt a rational

content, but a content which is *immediately individual*, and for that reason also *natural, contingent and subjective*—a content which may be determined quite as much by mere particularities of want and opinion, etc., and by the self-positing subjectivity which sets itself against the universal, as it [practical mind] may be in itself in conformity with reason." *Encyclopedia*, §471.

28. "If feelings are of the right sort, it is because of their quality or content—which is right only so far as it is intrinsically universal or has its source in the thinking mind." *Encyclopedia*, §471.

29. "Impulse must be distinguished from mere appetite [*Begierde*]. The latter . . . is something individual [*Einzelnes*] and seeks only what is individual for an individual, momentary satisfaction. Impulse, on the other hand, since it is a form of volitional intelligence, starts from the integrated opposition of subjectivity and objectivity, and embraces a series of satisfactions, hence is a whole, a universal. At the same time, however, impulse coming as it does from the individuality of practical feeling and forming only the first negation of it, is still something particular. That is why the man who is controlled by impulses is manifestly unfree." *Encyclopedia*, §473, Zusatz.

30. "The subject is the activity of satisfying impulses, of formal rationality, namely of the translation out of the subjectivity of content (which so far is *purpose*) into objectivity, in which the subject comes together with itself. If the content of the impulse is distinguished as the matter [*Sache*] from the activity of carrying out the impulse, the matter which has come to be contains the moments of subjective individuality and its activity and is the subject's *interest*. Nothing therefore is brought about without interest." *Encyclopedia*, §475.

31. "Passion contains in its determination that it is restricted to a *particularity* of the determination of the will in which the whole subjectivity of the individual immerses itself, the content [*Gehalt*] of that determination be what it may . . . this form only expresses that a subject has laid his whole living interest, his spirit, talent, character, and enjoyment in *one* content. Nothing great has been and nothing great can be accomplished without passion." *Encyclopedia*, §474. Hegel echoes this point again in his *Philosophy of History*, trans. by J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), p. 23; TW, 12, pp. 37–38.

32. "The will contains (a) the element of pure indeterminacy or that pure reflection of the I into itself which involves the dissipation of every restriction and every content either immediately presented by nature, by needs, desires, and impulses, or given and determined by any means whatever. This is the unrestricted infinity of absolute abstraction or universality, the pure thought of oneself." *Philosophy of Right*, §5.

33. "Happiness is the mere abstract and merely imagined [*vorgestellte*] *universality* of the content—a universality which only *ought* to be." *Encyclopedia*, §480.

34. "The will, as thinking and in itself free differentiates itself from the

particularity of impulses and places itself as simple subjectivity of thought above their manifold content; it is thus *reflecting* will." *Encyclopedia*, §476.

35. Hegel does not confuse something's being in my interest with its being of selfish interest to me: "This is my *interest*, and this must not be confused with *selfishness*, for this *prefers* its particular content to the objective content." *Encyclopedia*, §475, Zusatz.

36. "But impulse and passion are the very life [*Lebendigkeit*] of the subject; they are needed if the subject is to be in his purposes and their execution. The ethical concerns the content, which as such is the *universal*, an inactive thing that finds its being set into motion in the subject. It finds it only when the purpose is immanent to the subject, is his interest and, when it claims his whole effective subjectivity, is passion." *Encyclopedia*, §475.

37. "The embodiment of freedom which was (A) first of all immediate as right, is (B) characterized in the reflection of self-consciousness as good. (C) The third stage, originating here, in its transition from (B) to ethical life, as the truth of good and subjectivity, is therefore the truth both of subjectivity and right. Ethical life is a subjective disposition, but one imbued with what is inherently right." *Philosophy of Right*, §141.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. *Philosophy of Right*, §15.

2. Gary Watson has argued a similar thesis. See Gary Watson. "Free Agency," *Journal of Philosophy*, April 1975, pp. 205–220. One should note that the two distinctions can cross paths. Schopenhauer once scheduled his lectures at the same time as Hegel's lectures. It is not difficult to imagine a Berlin student of those days holding it to be worthwhile that he go to Professor Hegel's lecture at 3:30 and that he go to Professor Schopenhauer's lecture at 3:30, while realizing that he could not go to both.

3. *Philosophy of Right*, §19.

4. Passages in the "Introduction" to the *Philosophy of Right* reinforce this line of interpretation. When the "will's content" is "*immediate*," that is to say, is an object of straightforward desire—a want, as it might be called—the will "is then free only in itself . . . it is not until it has itself as its object that the will is for *itself* what it is in itself," namely, free. *Philosophy of Right*, §10.

5. About this second point: persons who are drawn by desires that they would rather not have (an uncontrollable desire to steal or to do embarrassing things) are often said (and often describe themselves) as being driven by desires that are not really their own. How would this be possible? Since our system of valuations makes up to a large extent our standpoint in the world (why else is idealization so important for Hegel?), it also defines in large part *who* we are. It is only when we are able to fit these desires into our systems

of valuation that we often feel that they belong to us, that are part of who we are. Until then, we may feel ourselves to be driven by forces alien to us. The free person is one who is able to mesh his or her desires and valuations—that is, able to do what he or she really wants. A theory of freedom must therefore be a theory of these evaluations and of which set expresses our nature as rational agents; it will also be an ethical and political theory, since it will be a theory of the social and political conditions for ability to make concrete valuations. It will be, that is, a theory of the moral world.

6. For example, in a significant passage in the introductory paragraph to the section on the philosophy of nature in the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel says, "Not only must philosophy be in correspondence with our experience of nature, the origin and formation [*Entstehung und Bildung*] of philosophical science has empirical physics as its presupposition and condition." *Encyclopedia*, §246.

7. *Philosophy of Right*, §§35, 47.

8. *Philosophy of Right*, §35. The term is a legal one, and it is from this legal usage, one assumes, that Hegel derives his usage. The legal usage of the term has been explained in the following way: "To be a person means to be capable of holding rights, i.e., to be *rechtsfähig*. The capacity to hold rights (*Rechtsfähigkeit*), which is enjoyed by all persons, must be distinguished from the capacity to enter into legal transactions (*Geschäftsfähigkeit*) and the capacity to be responsible for civil delicts (*Zurechnungsfähigkeit*)." E. J. Cohn, *Manual of German Law* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1950), §105.

9. Indeed, so Hegel claims, "individuals and nations have no personhood until they have achieved this pure thought and knowledge of themselves," where this knowledge of themselves is specified as a knowledge of self as "self-relation," as "purely self-identical," that is, as "something infinite, universal and free." *Philosophy of Right*, §35. This is another specification of Hegel's notion of mind as that which comprehends things, idealizes them; mind is infinite, not bounded by anything except the limits set by its own rational nature. The conceptions through which it organizes the world into the Idea are bound only by the constraints of reason (of making sense) which are its nature; hence, it is not limited by an other (which would make it finite) but only by itself, and hence it is infinite.

10. *Philosophy of Right*, §36.

11. Compare, for example, what Kant says in the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Moral*, trans. by H. J. Paton (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 107: "Our own will, provided it were to act only under the condition of being able to make universal law by means of its maxims—this ideal will which can be ours is the proper object of reverence; and the dignity of man consists precisely in his capacity to make universal law, although only on condition of being himself also subject to the law he makes."

12. Compare what Hegel says in the *Philosophy of Right*, §209: "A person [*Mensch*] counts as such only because he is a person, not because he is a Jew,

Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc.”

13. *Philosophy of Right*, §38.

14. There are two versions of this. The most famous, of course, is the colorful youthful work, the long *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel reworked the first part of this book into a section of his *Encyclopedia*. There are many interesting issues about the differences between the arguments found in these two works, which I shall not go into here. My reading is based mostly on the later version found in the *Encyclopedia*.

15. *Encyclopedia*, §426.

16. *Encyclopedia*, §427.

17. *Encyclopedia*, §428, Zusatz.

18. Were another's interests to figure in the content of desire, then one would have altruistic (or perhaps sadistic) desire. Hegel's passage from this notion of self-consciousness to the notion of consciousness of another person is not an attempt at a demonstration that my self-consciousness is possible only through mastery of, say, a public language, one shared by many self-conscious persons; he is not interested, as I understand him, in epistemologically proving the existence of other minds (although his view of things would involve some such conception of our knowledge as possible only in terms of a larger world-knowledge which included conceptions of others like ourselves). He is basically concerned with the acknowledgment of the other as a person and to show that this acknowledgment cannot be coherently phrased in the language of desire as a simple means/ends view of things.

19. *Encyclopedia*, §431, Zusatz.

20. *Encyclopedia*, §435, Zusatz.

21. This is one reason why Hegel would not accept social contract theory; it requires promises on the part of people and commitment to keep them, but that presupposes prior acceptance of the framework of morality. The notion of keeping a promise to another person or maintaining some kind of commitment to them is dependent on acknowledging that they are worth keeping promises to. It is significant that Hegel does not base his fundamental ethical considerations on acceptance of rules of any kind but on the more obscure (and perhaps more insightful) notion of the quality of relationships we have with others. Promises, commitment, and the like make sense only when the other is perceived as deserving of such commitment. For Hegel, then, the question will become, “under what sets of social and political conditions will this kind of acknowledgment be possible?” It is surely impossible in the state of nature; hence, one could not get of the state of nature by any contract, for the contract would presuppose some kind of a social and political order in order to be intelligible.

22. This is not a fully literal reading of the text. Rather, the move to mutual respect is the only way out of the dialectic of the master and the slave. Unless the move to mutual acknowledgment is made, the dialectic of master and slave remains like that of the bad infinite in the *Science of Logic*; it oscillates

from one to the other without ever resolving the contradiction.

23. *Philosophy of Right*, §41.

24. Hegel also holds that when seen in the context of morality, the will is conceived in the terms of the "Doctrine of Essence," namely, as a sub-structure invoked to explain the responsibility of the agent for some action or its consequences.

25. *Philosophy of Right*, §104.

26. "The moral standpoint therefore takes shape as the right of the subjective will. In accordance with this right, the will recognizes something and is something, only in so far as the thing is its own and as the will is present to itself there as something subjective." *Philosophy of Right*, §107.

27. Hegel remarks that in morality, the "reflection of the will into itself and its explicit awareness of this identity make the person into a subject." *Philosophy of Right*, §105. "Person" is being used by Hegel as a quasi-legal category, meaning an entity to which imputation of rights can be made.

28. "The deed sets up an alteration in this state of affairs [*Dasein*] confronting the will, and my will has responsibility in general for its deed in so far as the abstract predicate 'mine' belongs to the state of affairs so altered." *Philosophy of Right*, §115.

29. "It is, of course, not my own doing if damage is caused to others by things whose owner I am and which as external objects stand and are effective in manifold connexions with other things (as may also be the case with my self as a bodily mechanism or as a living thing)." *Philosophy of Right*, §116. Also: "Thus the will has the right to repudiate the imputation of all consequences except the first, since it alone was purposed." *Philosophy of Right*, §118.

30. "Etymologically, *Absicht* (intention) implies abstraction, either the form of universality or the extraction of a particular aspect of the concrete thing." *Philosophy of Right*, §119.

31. Part of the sense of the argument apparently depends on seeing *Absicht*, as opposed to *Vorsatz*, as carrying a sense of reflection in it. In his notes to his excellent translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, T. M. Knox explains this as follows: "The meaning seems to be that when we distinguish the intention (*Absicht*) from what is done, we are 'looking away from' (*absehen*) certain aspects of the concrete event." *Philosophy of Right*, trans. by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 338.

32. "Now the transition from purpose to intention lies in the fact that I ought to be aware not simply of my single action but also of the universal which is conjoined with it." *Philosophy of Right*, §118, Addition.

33. "Vice versa, what may be called the right of the objectivity of action is the right of the action to evince itself as known and willed by the subject as a *thinker*. . . . This right to insight of this kind entails the complete, or almost complete, irresponsibility [*Zurechnungsunfähigkeit*] of children, imbeciles, lunatics, &c., for their actions." *Philosophy of Right*, §120.

34. Part of Hegel's critique of Kantian morality is that it fails to understand that any concept of moral action is necessarily a particular conception, embedded within a type of society, and not necessarily common "universally" to all forms of life.

35. "In a case of arson, for instance, the fire may not catch or alternatively it may take hold further than the incendiary intended. In spite of this, however, we must not make this a distinction between good and bad luck, since in acting a man must lay his account with externality. . . . To act is to expose oneself to bad luck. Thus bad luck has a right over me and is an embodiment [Daseins] of my own willing." *Philosophy of Right*, §119, Addition.

36. "The universal quality of the action is the manifold content of the action as such, reduced to the simple form of universality. But the subject, an entity reflected into himself and so particular in correlation with the particularity of his object, has in his end his own particular content, and this content is the soul of the action and determines its character. The fact that this moment of the particularity of the agent is contained and realized in the action constitutes subjective freedom in its more concrete sense, the right of the subject to find his satisfaction in the action." *Philosophy of Right*, §121.

37. It should not be confused with well-being, *Glückseligkeit*, nor should it be confused with what could be called the general welfare: "We are considering right as abstract right and welfare as the particular welfare of the single agent. The so-called 'general good', the welfare of the state, i.e., the right of mind actual and concrete, is quite a different sphere, a sphere in which abstract right is a subordinate moment like particular welfare and the happiness of the individual." *Philosophy of Right*, §126. He also says, "Its content is my special aim, the aim of my particular, merely individual, existence, i.e., *Welfare*." *Philosophy of Right*, §114.

38. The importance of Hegel's conception of motivation for his critique of morality has also been noted by Andreas Wildt in his important work, *Autonomie und Anerkennung: Hegels Moralkritik im Lichte seiner Fichte-Rezeption* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1982). Wildt argues that Hegel's view of morality comes down to the thesis that "morality is relativized to a 'moral standpoint' . . . only in ethical [sittlichen] contexts of life are there convincing reasons to take this standpoint; if however the transsubjective ethical relations of acknowledgement are hopelessly destroyed, then there is also no longer any strong reason to be moral. And moral obligations then have, whether they are otherwise legitimately required, in principle the character of a groundless, mere 'ought'" (p. 18). Hegel does not so much reject the formalism of morality, Wildt argues, as he takes it to be a "deficient form of intersubjectivity" (p. 104). The institutions of ethical life are thus the conditions for the actuality of morality (see p. 108). Wildt also notes how Hegel's understanding of the motivational force of ethical institutions undermines the Kantian ideal of autonomy in its insistence on the autonomous will's independence of every context of contingent motivation (p. 176). Wildt takes the categories of social

life as institutional conditions for maintaining the correct moral motivations. However, Wildt takes the principles contained in ethical life to be nonenforceable obligations, whereas the principles of morality lead to enforceable obligations. We can have, for example, nonenforceable obligations to have certain emotions; we can only have enforceable obligations to do certain actions. Ethical life is, on Wildt's view, concerned with the former, not the latter. An example of such a nonenforceable obligation is mutual faithfulness in a marriage. This seems to me to underplay the various kinds of enforceable principles that one finds in the kinds of social unities that Hegel discusses. The social categories provide not just conditions for moral motivation but also provide the framework for understanding ethical principles that could not be understood except as constituting these kinds of social unity. It also underplays the extent to which some forms of ethical life—in particular, the market and the political state—lead to enforceable obligations. Wildt captures only part of Hegel's critique of morality, in that he ignores or downplays Hegel's theses that I can take note of the rules of morality only in some socially specific form; and the enjoyment of the goods of social life, which give me a reason to be moral, is possible only in particular forms of social and political life.

39. See *Philosophy of Right*, §127 and Addition.

40. "These specific duties, however, are not contained in the definition of duty itself; but since both of them are conditioned and restricted, they *eo ipso* bring about the transition to the higher sphere of the unconditioned, the sphere of duty. Duty itself in the moral self-consciousness is the essence or the universality of that consciousness, the way in which it is inwardly related to itself alone; all that is left to it, therefore, is abstract universality, and for its determinate character it has identity without content, or the abstractly positive, the indeterminate." *Philosophy of Right*, §135.

41. Bernard Williams comes to similar Hegelian conclusions in his *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985).

42. "Because every action explicitly calls for a particular content and a specific end, while duty as an abstraction entails nothing of the kind, the question arises: what is my duty?" *Philosophy of Right*, §134.

43. There is another reason for this, having to do with Hegel's architectonic. *Sittlichkeit* is part of what Hegel calls Objective Spirit. This is distinguished from Absolute Spirit in the following way (in purely Hegelian terms). The categories of Objective Spirit are those whose rational validity is dependent on their plural instantiation. Thus, whether this or that family life is the one to pursue is dependent on the way in which abstract ideals have been embodied in a particular culture. The categories of Absolute Spirit are those whose rational validity does not depend on their plural instantiation. The categories of Art, Religion, and Philosophy belong to Absolute Spirit. For example: if Christianity is true, it must be as true for us living in the twentieth century as it was for those people of the first century, despite the vast dif-

ferences found in the cultures of the time. Ethics thus is relative to a particular culture in a way in which religion is not.

44. *Philosophy of Right*, §137.

45. Hegel thus claims against Kant, "an immanent and consistent [*konsequente*] doctrine of duties can be nothing except the development of the relationships [*Verhältnisse*] which are necessitated through the Idea of freedom and are therefore *actual* in their entirety, to wit in the state." *Philosophy of Right*, §148.

46. *Philosophy of Right*, §151.

47. For example, a vegetarian might object to the commonplace eating of animals within his culture by first appealing to accepted norms of not inflicting unnecessary pain and then arguing that it is therefore illegitimate to inflict such pain on sentient beings such as cows or pigs. Conventions can come under attack from the standpoint of other conventions.

48. This imputation of social categories to Hegel's theory has been made by Klaus Hartmann. See his "Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View," in Alasdair MacIntyre, ed., *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), pp. 101–124.

49. *Philosophy of Right*, §145.

50. *Philosophy of Right*, §145.

51. *Philosophy of Right*, §145.

52. *Philosophy of Right*, §146.

53. *Philosophy of Right*, §146.

54. *Philosophy of Right*, §142.

55. *Philosophy of Right*, §144, Addition.

56. *Philosophy of Right*, §145.

57. See *Philosophy of Right*, §§15–19.

58. *Philosophy of Right*, §19.

59. *Philosophy of Right*, §15.

60. Hegel's point might be perhaps put in a different way. The relation between the general claims of "Abstract Right" and "Morality" to particular moral and political choices is one mediated by the institutions and practices of the culture. A doctrine of social categories is in part the attempt to present how these abstract claims involving general obligations, for example, to avoid interference and provide benefits, may be concretely phrased. They provide, that is, the interpretive framework by which concrete conceptions of these general claims may be articulated and concrete political strategies for realizing these claims may be worked out. A philosophical theory of social categories is in part an evaluation of how well the basic types of union in a given society offer rationally construable conceptions of what is right and good. How well do they embody abstract rights of personhood? How much do they contribute to human flourishing? How are they consistent with one another? A theory of social categories is not a mere enumeration of the ways in which one's culture conceives of the proper organization of the world of value. It is an

explanation of how those general conceptions are possible from within the standpoint of a concrete culture. The conventions of the culture may thus come under attack from two sides. It may turn out that some of one's culture's conceptions of the proper organization of value are not *possible*, given other conceptions it holds; or it may turn out that no plausible interpretation of the abstract rights of liberty and respect for persons can be given in which these conventions take the form they currently have.

61. *Philosophy of Right*, p. 11; *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1962), p. 16; TW, 7, p. 26.

62. *Philosophy of Right*, §162.

63. *Philosophy of Right*, §192. Hegel goes on to say, "The fact that I must direct my conduct by reference to others introduces here the form of universality. . . . We play into each other's hands and so hang together. To this extent everything private becomes something social." *Philosophy of Right*, §192, Addition.

64. See *Philosophy of Right*, §§244–245.

65. "The differing interests of producers and consumers may come into collision with each other; and although a fair balance between them on the whole may be brought about automatically, still their adjustment also requires a control which stands above both and is consciously undertaken." *Philosophy of Right*, §236. See also §237. This reflects Hegel's belief, based on his understanding of some of the figures of the Scottish enlightenment, that a market will not necessarily correct itself if left to its own devices. Thus, Hegel breaks with Adam Smith here in favor of other Scots such as James Steuart. An excellent and illuminating account of Hegel's relation to the Scottish enlightenment—particularly to Scottish ideas on the nature and value of markets—can be found in Laurence Dickey's *Hegel: Religion, Economics and the Politics of Spirit, 1770–1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

66. See *Philosophy of Right*, §183.

67. For a good account and criticism of Hegel's conception of the *Notstaat*, see Günther Maluschke, *Philosophische Grundlagen des Verfassungsstaates* (Freiburg: Karl Alber Verlag, 1983), pp. 237–247.

68. "In its character as a universal family, civil society has the right and duty of superintending and influencing education, inasmuch as education bears upon the child's capacity to become a member of society. Society's right here is paramount over the arbitrary and contingent preferences of parents, particularly in cases where education is to be completed not by the parents but by others. To the same end, society must provide public educational facilities so far as is practicable." *Philosophy of Right*, §239.

69. *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

70. This could also be read anachronistically as an anticipation and attempt at rebuttal of Marx's later criticisms of Hegel's theory of the state. Marx claimed that the state is an organ of society that the ruling class (the class that owns the means of production) uses to further its own interests and to

suppress the effecting of the interests of other classes. In his youthful criticism of Hegel's theory, Marx claimed that the state will be composed of people with their own interests who will seek to use it to impose those interests on the populace at large. However, the whole reason for the move from the "state based on need" to the state proper is to avoid the kinds of criticisms that Marx was later to make.

71. Moreover, we could easily have (and there do in fact exist) states guaranteeing certain kinds of economic liberty while simultaneously denying political liberty. Economic rights and civil rights (those defining the extent of political participation) are not necessarily coextensive.

72. I am here taking Hegel's explicit descriptions of the constitutional state as an organism as not implying any such sinister "organic" interpretations (see for example, the *Philosophy of Right*, §259: "The Idea of the state (a) has immediate actuality and is the individual state as a self-dependent organism—the *Constitution* or *Constitutional Law*"). This is another example of how one must take care with the Hegelian texts. I take Hegel's talk of the state as an "organism" to be his (misguided) description of the state as a moral subject in its own right—as something that may be held to be accountable for its actions, that can be the subject of litigation.

73. Hegel also apparently saw this as distinct from the classical ideals of political community, which used as their model of unity a kind of aesthetic ideal, a view of community as embodying ideals of the beautiful. See Dieter Henrich's enlightening discussion of this in "The Relevance of Hegel's Aesthetics," in Michael Inwood, *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 199–207. In distinguishing civil society and the state in this manner, Hegel was no doubt also departing from his earlier appropriation of Schiller's aesthetic model of social reform. See Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics and the Politics of Spirit, 1770–1807*, chap. 7, for a discussion of the impact of Schiller and the Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson on Hegel's early thought.

74. *Philosophy of Right*, §261.

75. *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

76. *Philosophy of Right*, §258.

77. "The state is the actuality of the ethical Idea. It is ethical mind *qua* the substantial will manifest and revealed to itself, knowing and thinking itself, accomplishing what it knows and in so far as it knows it." *Philosophy of Right*, §257.

78. "This substantial unity is an absolute unmoved end in itself, in which freedom comes into its supreme right. On the other hand this final end has supreme right against the individual, whose supreme duty is to be a member of the state." *Philosophy of Right*, §257.

79. This is one way of understanding the source of Hegel's disagreement with Jacob Fries. Hegel's well known and even vitriolic attack on Fries in the "Preface" to the *Philosophy of Right* was for a long time regarded as positive proof of Hegel's reactionary and authoritarian (if not proto-fascistic) tend-

encies. Fries has been taken as a kind of nationalist liberal, who endorsed a warm and sympathetic view of community, and Hegel's attack on Fries has been taken as a particularly ugly display of Hegel's own reactionary views. There have several works of modern scholarship that have put to rest that interpretation both of Fries and Hegel's reaction to him. See in particular, Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 119–121. Fries was an anti-Semite and German nationalist chauvinist who defended the student fraternities (*Burschenschaften*) and gave a speech at an academic festival for the fraternities in which he spoke of the discharge of public life coming from the bonds of feeling and friendship of a people in a genuine community. Hegel called this the “quintessence of shallow thinking” (*Philosophy of Right*, “Preface,” p. 6), thus seeming to be against something either innocuous or positive in tone. The fraternities that Fries championed, however, were a enthusiastic mob of book burners, anti-Semites, and ultra-nationalists. Hegel's belief that the state had to act in accordance with the ethical principles that were ascribed to it as a moral subject in its own right served as the justification of his condemnation of Fries. The fraternities were savagely repressed by the government, thus giving them a kind of ex post facto luster in the eyes of history. Hegel defended the government's repression of these groups, no doubt because he more feared the result of letting them continue than he feared the political consequences of such a crackdown. Hegel's attack on Fries thus acquired a kind of ex post facto tarnish. As history showed, however, Hegel was right in seeing that there was indeed something there to fear. That need not make us, however, completely sanguine about Hegel's perhaps too enthusiastic endorsement of the government's crackdown on the fraternities.

80. “Confronted with the claims made for the individual will, we must remember the fundamental conception that the objective will is rationality implicit or in conception, whether it be recognized or not by individuals, whether their whims be deliberately for it or not. . . . The opposite to thinking of the state as something to be known and apprehended as explicitly rational is taking external appearances—i.e., contingencies such as distress, need for protection, force, riches, &c.—not as moments in the state's historical development, but as its substance.” *Philosophy of Right*, §257, Remark.

81. Hegel draws an interesting conclusion from the idea that the state should be seen as a moral agent in its own right. His conclusion has been, since the time he first made it, a source of considerable controversy in the literature on his political philosophy. Hegel concludes that if the state is to be seen as a moral agent, then it must be embodied in a single individual, namely, the monarch. The monarch is bound by constitutional principles but remains a hereditary position. Hegel's argument seems to be the following. The state must be conceived as a single moral agent. It must have therefore a single legitimacy, a unitary authority. Hegel calls this the *sovereignty* of the state. Sovereignty “is the strictly individual aspect of the state, and in virtue

of this alone is the state *one*. The truth of subjectivity, however, is attained only in a subject, and the truth of personality only in a person; and in a constitution which has become mature as a realization of rationality, each of the three moments of the conception has its explicitly actual and separate formation. Hence this absolutely decisive moment of the whole is not individuality in general, but a single individual, the monarch." *Philosophy of Right*, §279. In other words, the state can be a moral agent only if there is a person that represents it. But why not a president or a prime minister? "This ultimate self in which the will of the state is concentrated is, when taken in abstraction a single self and therefore is *immediate* individuality. Hence its 'natural' character is implied in its very conception." *Philosophy of Right*, §280. This has two great assumptions in it: first, that the state can be a moral agent only if *one* person represents it; second, that any representative person must embody therefore all the natural characteristics of being a person. Why should one make the first assumption? Why cannot a *committee* represent the state? Hegel has a long, extended set of remarks to show that the idea of a single person's representing the state is necessarily implied by the idea of the state as a moral agent. The remarks, however, do little more than restate the assumptions as if they were proofs of the claim. (For example, consider the following argument from Hegel: "A so-called 'artificial person', be it a society, a community or a family, however inherently concrete it may be, contains personality only abstractly, as one moment of itself. In an 'artificial person', personality has not achieved its true mode of existence." *Philosophy of Right*, §279, Remark. Maybe so, but that only restates the assumption; it does not prove it.) There has been much speculation about how this was Hegel's attempt to placate the Prussian monarchy. Perhaps it was, but in any event, he does give some arguments for the position, however unsatisfactory they may be.

82. "The state, therefore, knows what it wills and knows it in its universality, i.e., as something thought. Hence it works and acts by reference to consciously adopted ends, known principles, and laws which are not merely implicit but are actually present to consciousness; and further, it acts with precise knowledge of existing conditions and circumstances, inasmuch as its actions have a bearing on these." *Philosophy of Right*, §270.

83. See *Philosophy of Right*, §§273–274.

84. Speaking of the constitution as the "universal," Hegel says that it "does not prevail or achieve completion except along with particular knowing and willing." *Philosophy of Right*, §260.

85. The sentiment of patriotism is "trust (which may pass over into a greater or lesser degree of educated insight), or the consciousness that my interest, both substantive and particular, is contained and preserved in another's (i.e., the state's) interest and end, i.e., in the other's relation to me as an individual. In this way, this very other is immediately not an other in my eyes, and in being conscious of this fact, I am free." *Philosophy of Right*, §268.

86. "The principle of modern states has prodigious strength and depth because it allows the principle of subjectivity to progress to its culmination in the extreme of self-subsistent personal particularity, and yet at the same time brings it back to the substantive unity and so maintains this unity in the principle of subjectivity itself." *Philosophy of Right*, §260.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. John Edward Toews in his *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805–1841* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), provides a fascinating account of the historical milieu in which Hegel's thoughts on history and religion seized the imaginations of young Germans in Berlin.

2. "We might then announce it as the first condition to be observed that we should faithfully adopt all that is historical. But in such general expressions themselves, as 'faithfully' and 'adopt,' lies the ambiguity. Even the ordinary, the 'impartial' historiographer, who believes and professes that he maintains a simply receptive attitude; surrendering himself only to the data supplied him—is by no means passive as regards the exercise of this thinking powers. He brings his categories with him, and sees the phenomena presented to his mental vision, exclusively through these media." *Philosophy of History*, trans. by J. Sibree (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), p. 11; TW, 12, p. 23.

3. *Philosophy of History*, p. 1; TW, 12, p. 11. The phrase in question reads, "deren Geist sie selbst zugehört haben."

4. *Philosophy of History*, p. 4; TW, 12, p. 14.

5. *Philosophy of History*, p. 6; TW, 12, p. 17.

6. "In our language the term 'History' unites the objective with the subjective side, and denotes quite as much the *historia rerum gestarum*, as the *res gestae* themselves; on the other hand it comprehends not less what has happened, than the *narration* of what has happened. The union of the two meanings we must regard as of a higher order than mere outward accident; we must suppose historical narrations to have appeared contemporaneously with historical deeds and events." *Philosophy of History*, p. 60; TW, 12, p. 83.

7. *Philosophy of History*, p. 61; TW, 12, p. 83.

8. "The periods—whether we suppose them to be centuries or millennia—that were passed by nations before history was written among them—and which may have been filled with revolutions, nomadic wanderings, and the wildest changes—are on that account destitute of *objective* history because they present no *subjective history*, no annals. We need not suppose that the records of such periods have accidentally perished; rather, because they were not possible, do we find them wanting." *Philosophy of History*, p. 61; TW, 12, p. 84.

9. He calls such histories "fragmentary" (*Teilweise*). *Philosophy of History*,

pp. 7–8; TW, 12, p. 19.

10. Hegel distinguishes two essential components for historical progression in his “Introduction” to the *Philosophy of History*. First there is the element of the “principle” or “essence” of things. More is needed. “Aims, principles, etc., have a place in our thoughts, in our inner intention only; but not yet in actuality. That which is in itself [*an sich*] only is a possibility, a capability; but has not yet emerged from the inner sphere into existence. A second element must be introduced in order to produce actuality —viz., actuation, realization; and whose motive power is the will—the activity of man in the widest sense.” *Philosophy of History*, p. 22; TW, 12, p. 36.

11. “‘*Feudum*’ is connected with ‘*fides*’; the fidelity implied in this case is a bond established on unjust principles, a relation that does indeed contemplate a legitimate object, but whose import is not a whit the less injustice; for the fidelity of vassals is not an obligation to the Commonwealth, but a private one—*ipso facto* therefore subject to the sway of chance, caprice and violence. . . . The valor that now manifested itself, was displayed not on behalf of the State but of private interests.” *Philosophy of History*, p. 370; TW, 12, p. 446.

12. “What special course of action, however, is good or not, is determined, as regards the ordinary contingencies of private life, by the laws and customs of a State; and here a great difficulty is presented. Each individual has his position; he knows on the whole what a just, honorable course of conduct is. . . . It is quite otherwise with the comprehensive relations that history has to do with. In this sphere are presented those momentous collisions between existing, acknowledged duties, laws, and rights, and those contingencies which are adverse to this fixed system; which assail and even destroy its foundations and existence; whose tenor may nevertheless seem good—on the large scale advantageous—yes, even indispensable and necessary.” *Philosophy of History*, pp. 28–29; TW, 12, pp. 44–45.

13. “We might be inclined to regard the picture of the noble and rational constitution of the Frank monarchy under Charlemagne . . . as a baseless figment. Yet it actually existed; the entire setup of the state being held together only by the power, the greatness, the regal sense of this individual—not based on the spirit of the people—not having become a living element in it. . . . That, on the contrary, which constitutes the actuality of a constitution, is that it exists as objective freedom—the substantial form of volition—as duty and obligation in the subjects themselves. But for the German Spirit, which at first existed only as heart and subjective choice, there was no obligation present, nor was there any subjectivity involving unity but only a subjectivity of an indifferent, superficial being-for-self. Thus that constitution was destitute of any firm bond; it had no objective support in subjectivity; for in fact no constitution was as yet possible.” *Philosophy of History*, pp. 368–369; TW, 12, p. 444.

14. *Philosophy of History*, p. 104; TW, 12, p. 134.

15. *The Philosophy of History*, p. 21; TW, 12, p. 35.

16. "The only thought that philosophy brings with it is the simple thought of *reason*; that reason rules the world; that also in the history of the world things have therefore rationally transpired. This conviction and insight is a *presupposition* in the consideration of history as such. In that of philosophy it is no presupposition. It is there proved by speculative cognition, that reason—and this term may here suffice us, without mentioning the relation and connection [*Beziehung und Verhältnis*] to God—is *substance*, as well as *infinite power*; its own *infinite material* [*Stoff*] underlying all the natural and spiritual life that it originates, as also the infinite form — that which sets this material in motion." *Philosophy of History*, p. 9; TW, 12, p. 20. (I have altered the Sibree translation quite a bit here.)

CONCLUSION

1. See the very lucid and interesting discussion of the many issues connected with this in Gerd Buchdahl, "Hegel's Philosophy of Nature and the Structure of Science," in Michael Inwood, ed., *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 110–136.

2. Is rational superiority transitive? Perhaps one theory could be rationally superior to another theory but not to that theory's predecessors, since the latter's predecessors may not be asking the same questions. However, it would seem with minimal assumptions that rational superiority would have to be transitive. Consider the following. A conception X is rationally superior to Y if and only if: (1) there is some problem that is a problem for Y but that Y cannot solve but that X can solve; and (2) there is no problem that is a problem for X that X cannot solve but that Y can solve. Transitivity follows if every problem a conception can solve is also a problem for that conception, which seems to be a reasonable assumption to make. (I get this argument from Henry Richardson, who convinced me that my earlier doubts about transitivity were misplaced.)

3. This is perhaps only one more example of a principle that is not itself validated by Hegel's dialectical procedure but in fact underlies its plausibility. In arguing for a pluralistic view of explanatory theories, Robert Nozick points out a similar principle, arguing that "In devaluing people, the reductionist violates the principle that everything is to be treated as having the value it has. Reductionism is not simply a theoretical mistake, it is a moral failing." Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 631. Nozick suggests that since the goal of explanation is to "find simpler processes and traits, subparts that underlie and account for complicated and valuable activities" (*ibid.*, p. 633), reductionism is an inextricable and itself valuable part of a valuable activity, viz., the formulating of explanations. Therefore, the "activity of *formulating* reductionist theories . . . adds

still more to the challenge faced by any explanatory reductionism that purports to be the one true view" (ibid., p. 645). Hegel might be read as accepting something like this, except that on his view, his rationally optimal theory invalidates the goal of reductionist theory once and for all.

4. See Klaus Hartmann, *Die Marxsche Theorie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970), pp. 52–55.

5. Michael Inwood has raised this cautionary point concerning some interpretations of Hegel (mine included): "Similarly, if Hegel is made too hygienic, his successors, Kierkegaard and Marx for example, may be left with no interesting and telling response to him. If each philosopher taken separately is made too 'interesting', then they might all end up saying the same thing and thus saying nothing to each other." Michael Inwood, "Introduction" to Michael Inwood, ed., *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).

6. See Hartmann, *Die Marxsche Theorie*.

7. Charles Taylor in his important and insightful study of Hegel makes such an assumption. He sees the whole Hegelian program as the attempt to work out a unification of the enlightenment project of giving a rational foundation to everything with the romantic ideal of self-fulfillment in an alienating age. In Taylor's words, "Hegel's philosophy can be seen as an attempt to realize a synthesis that the Romantic generation was groping towards: to combine the rational, self-legislating freedom of the Kantian subject with the expressive unity within man and with nature for which the age longed." Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 539. This project is, according to Taylor, dead: "That is, no one believes his central ontological thesis, that the universe is posited by a Spirit whose essence is rational necessity" (p. 538). Little is left of enduring interest in Hegel's theory; "although his ontological vision is not ours—indeed seems to deny the very problem as we now understand it—Hegel's writings provide one of the most profound and far-reaching attempts to work out a vision of embodied subjectivity, of thought and freedom emerging from the stream of life, finding expression in the forms of social existence, and discovering themselves in relation to nature and history" (p. 571). By working out an alternative account of the dynamics of Hegel's dialectic, I hope to have shown that there is still much of both enduring interest and importance in Hegelian theory.

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Hegel's Dialectic

The Explanation of Possibility

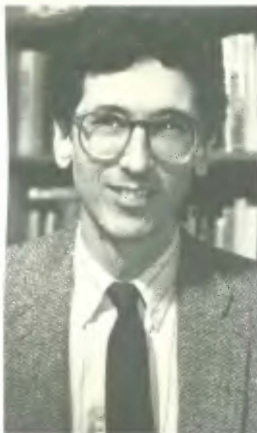
Terry Pinkard

Hegel is one of the most often cited and least read of all major philosophers. He is alternately regarded as the best and the worst that philosophy has produced. Nobody, however, disputes his influence. In *Hegel's Dialectic*, Terry Pinkard offers a new interpretation of Hegel's program that assesses his conception of the role of philosophy, his method, and some of the specific theses that he defended.

Hegel's dialectic is interpreted as offering explanations of the possibility of basic categories. Pinkard argues that the traditional standard reading of Hegel as the esoteric metaphysician of Absolute Spirit overlooks major elements of his thought. In presenting this alternative reading of Hegel, Pinkard offers a new understanding of the role of history in Hegel's thought and a new perspective on his moral and political thought.

Departing from the tradition of explicating Hegel exclusively in Hegelian terms, Pinkard discusses the much disputed philosopher in a way that is accessible and appealing to both analytic and non-analytic philosophers. *Hegel's Dialectic* is not just an interpretation of Hegel's thought; it is also a reconstruction and defense of Hegel's philosophy as having something of importance to say to late twentieth-century philosophers.

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Design: Liz Schweber
Printed in U.S.A.